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# IN TOUCH

For Men ISSUE 30

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BURT REYNOLDS

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Michael Ontkean

---

Van Johnson

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the erotic films of  
Peter de Rome

---

Washington, D.C.

---

the nude art of  
JOE JOHNSON

---

summer in the aegean

---

Mykonos

---

'MYSTERIES'

---

new fiction from

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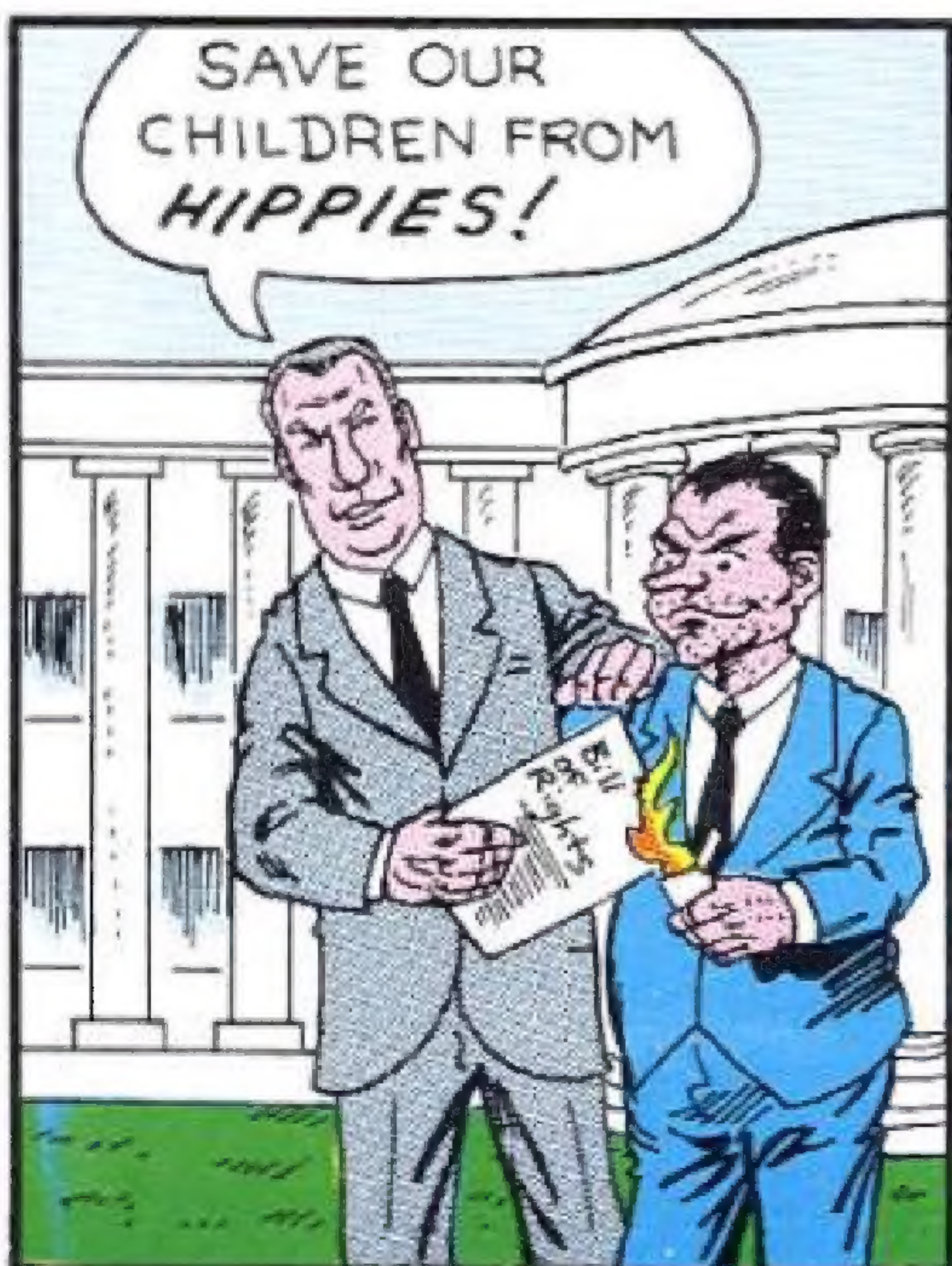
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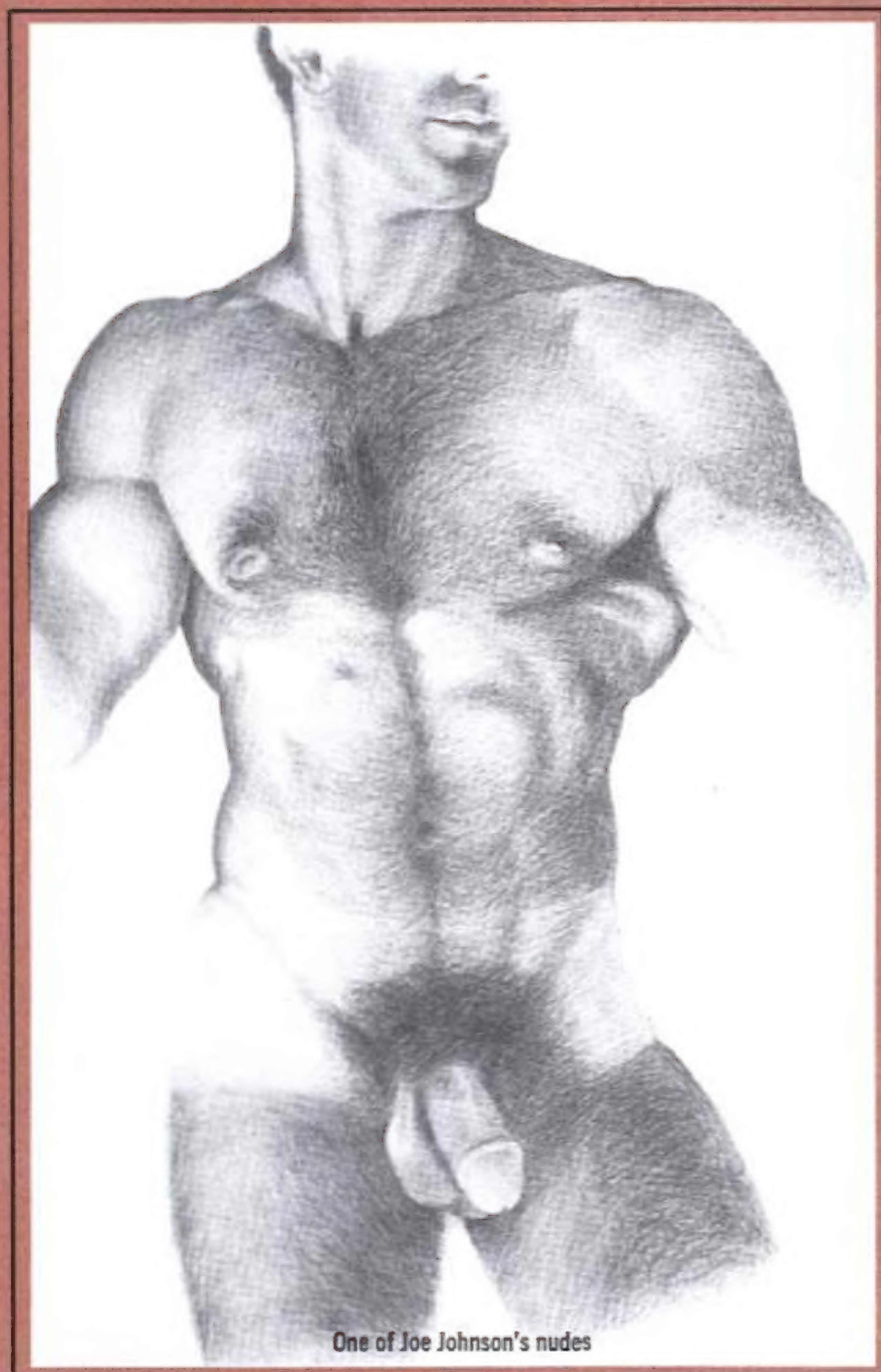
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# IN TOUCH

**For Men**

ISSUE 30



One of Joe Johnson's nudes

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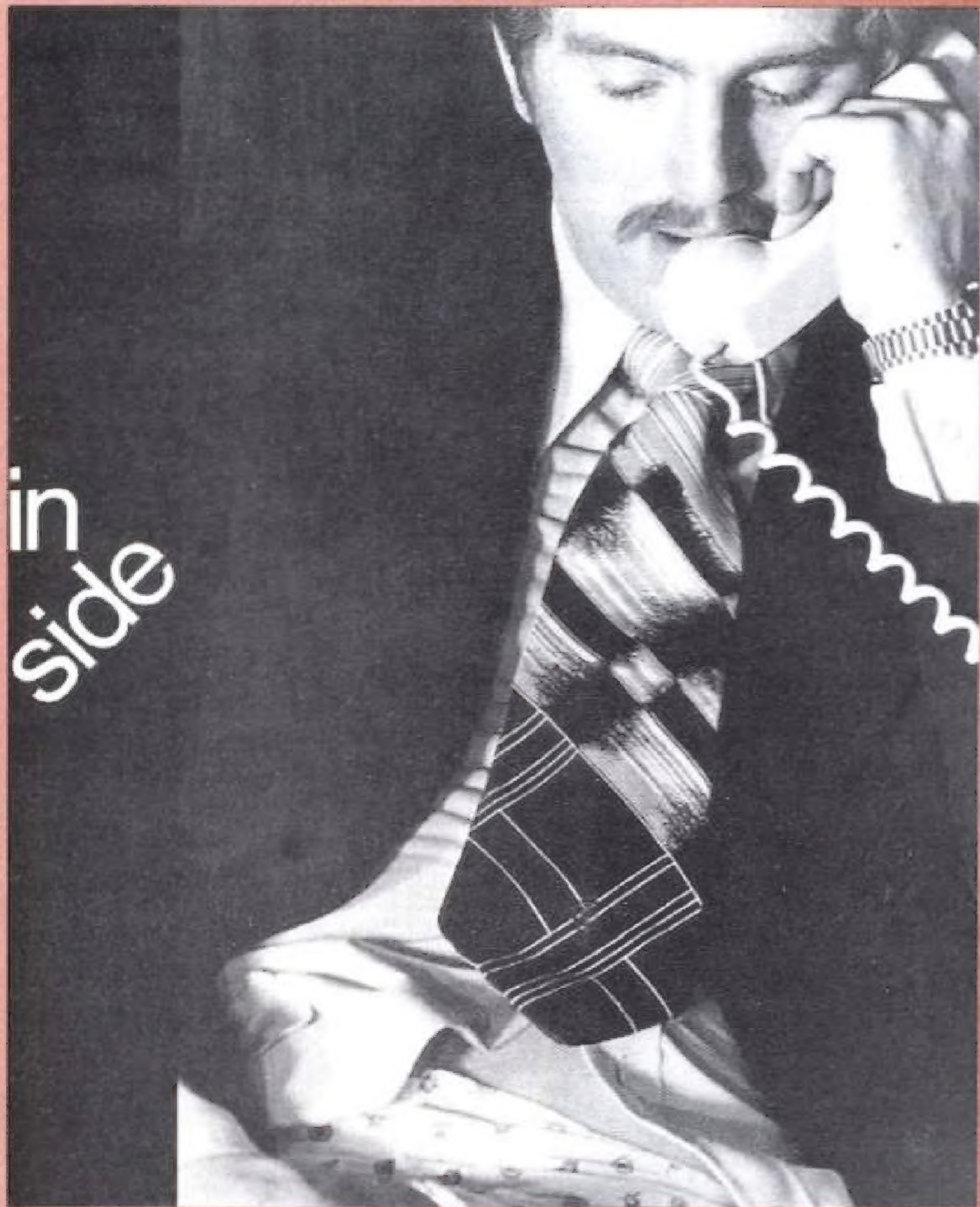


Photo by Hy Chase

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There must be a reason why we're growing so fast. And you'll find it between these pages. Three nude hunks in every issue, each one in hot color. Plus exciting foto features like

Hy Chase's striking "Menage"—in which John Montana, Karen Gates and Ric Ketchum create beautiful images together. And there's art-work, like Joe Johnson's nude drawings. You'll see more of his work in future issues, but if you can't wait, write him at Funny Bone Press, P.O. Box 26426, L.A., Cal. 90026.

We give you travel each time too. Like summer in the Greek Isles and Washington, D.C. And fiction. Richard Hall's "Mysteries"—the continuing adventures of the hero of his bestselling book *The Butterscotch Prince*.

Personalities? We've got them too. And we get them to open to us. Like Peter de Rome, who makes the most erotic films around. And Van Johnson, who's still going strong. And we profile young actor Michael Ontkean, who stops the show in *Slap Shot* with a striptease on ice. And Burt Reynolds, in an exclusive interview.

There's more. but why waste time talking about it? Let's get to it.

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# NIGHTLIFE

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## NIGHTLIFE

### miami

Hot days are here and the gay scene is at the beach. Drive out to Key Biscayne, a few miles from downtown Miami, and you can be alone or you can meet someone who might also be into skinny-dipping. Weekdays the beaches are deserted — plenty of room to do your thing.

Go north to Ft. Lauderdale and visit Wayne Hampton, who's become famous for his studies of young men at work. He always welcomes visitors to his studio at 28 Southeast Ninth St., Ft. Lauderdale. Call him, (305) 522-1185, for an appointment. If you're lucky, you might meet a "hunk" posing for him. One of my favorite sculptures is "Friends," lovingly depicting 2 nude young men in innocent and affectionate embrace. Also good is his "Men of America" series: each piece cast from the original mold and retaining the intricate and painstaking details of the male form.

A major hotel complex is opening here. The \$76 million Omni megastructure, in downtown Miami, is the 1st big hotel to open here in many years. It's the Omni International Miami, a 556-room hotel with 2 ballrooms, a parking garage, 6 movie theatres, 8 restaurants and 3 shopping levels. Also in the complex is Treasure Island, an entertainment center with 20 separate attractions, themed on the pirate adventure tale.

On Miami Beach, the Tourist Development Authority is presenting Shakespeare By The Sea in the outdoor North Shore Community Center Tues. and Sat. eves at 8 p.m. "Othello" and "Twelfth Night" will be presented by a pro cast by director Ivan Kivitt, brother of ballet's Ted Kivitt. Admission is free to guests at

Miami Beach hotels.

Miamians are still talking about Patrick, the All-American male stripper, who starred in Barry Ashton's "Paris Enchante" at the Americana last winter. If you missed him in Miami, you can "catch" him at Bimbo's 365 Club in San Francisco where he's appearing in "Vive Paris Vive." Not to be missed.



Patrick, the All-American Male Stripper

An exciting theatre season is set this summer with producer Zev Bufman of the Miami Beach Theatre of the Performing Arts negotiating for Lauren Bacall in "Wonderful Town," to be followed by Roberta Peters in "The Merry Widow," Paul Lynde in a comedy, "The Sonny and Cher Show" as the 1st of his shows and Shirley Jones in "The Sound of Music."

You can't leave winter without a note about Charo's show at the Fontainebleau's lavish La Ronde

Theatre. It was the "top" nightery act of the season. She gave her all, not the usual song and dance, but an evening of flamenco dancing with four goodlooking males in tight red costumes.

Las Mascaras Theatre has "Casa de Mujeres," a Spanish-language play, Thursday-Sunday in July and August and if you're into groovy Cubans, that is the place. Many handsome Latins are involved in theatre in Greater Miami.

Another good place to meet goodlookers is the Venetian Pool, in Coral Gables. The pool has underground caves to get lost in. Many guys of the University of Miami hang out there. Monday thru Friday there's nite swimming until 9.

—John Saunders

### new york

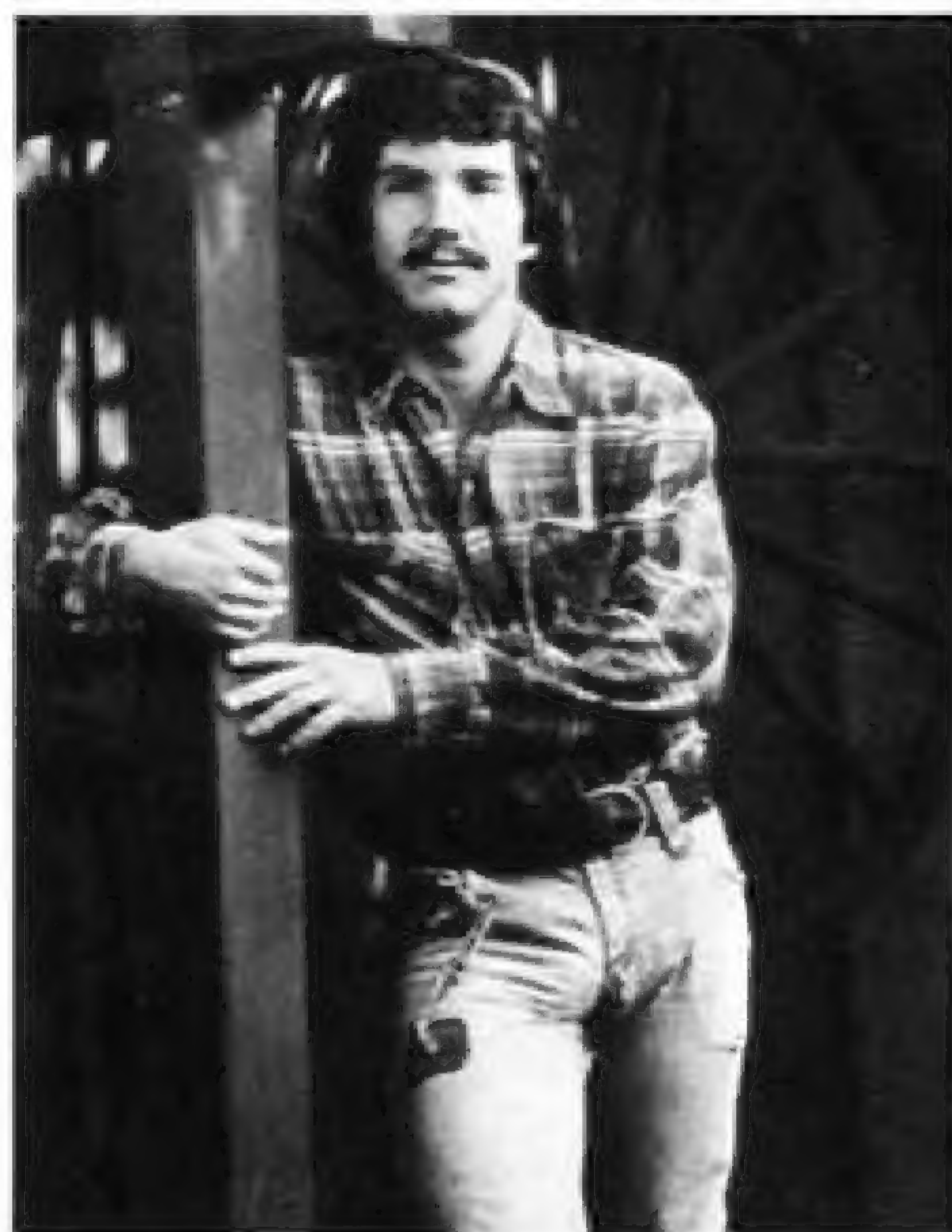
If you're coming this way, we will be in full summer swing — so don't waste time. First, the waterfront, especially in the Village from Morton St. pier up to the Eagle's Nest on 22nd. Christopher St. has a hot disco called "The Cock Ring" down at the water, complete with back room facilities. You might check that out and wend your way north past Twelve West, if you're into disco. Or otherwise, start at the new Badlands (also at the end) and make a beeline for the Mineshaft with its late nite coverage "in depth" of some of the most attractive men you'll ever see. Get someone to take you there — you'll never find it. It's on the waterfront, past the "abandoned piers."



On the East Side, we're promised a return of the clipper ships July 4th, so South St. Seaport will be full of foreign cats looking for fresh fish. But all of that will happen after the Christopher St. Liberation Day Parade — actually a whole week of Gay Lib festivities ending Sun., June 26th. So the city will be high as a kite well before the 4th. You wouldn't believe the tourism, the gays who flock to the site of the old Stonewall, now a Bagel And . . . and a Bowl and Board, and hear of that mythic crusade. But it does fill the city with fabulous people.

Theatre — well — this is actually an important year, with Beckett's own production of "Waiting for Godot," and the start of a new rep company by Frank Dunlop. Langdon Mitchell's "New York Idea" was a brilliant "find" — a Restoration-style view of New York written in 1906.

Lily Tomlin's I-woman show is a stand-up slap in the face, to say there's much more work to be done. She's a phenomenal presence in "Appearing Nitely." She hits you hard on issues like being gay, or what do you think about the liberating fantasy of a paraplegic, or her own fascination with life. And she switches roles — plays them all as a kind of cracked clown with the soul right in front. You laugh, sure, but you live with her, which is more.



N.Y.'s rage, Roger

Enough! Give me more space!! I'll turn your ears with news of the East Side Sauna — with its 2-story-high Sex Cyclatorium and viewing balconies. How about Roger over at the Jewel? The Jewel is hotter than ever with his slide show/disco strip entr'acte.

—David Sears

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## chicago

Chicago's had a recent deluge of glamour boy contests in bar preliminaries to name Mr. Windy City. Most of the festivities were amateur-produced, tasteless, overlong and often lasting 6 hours.

Among the worst was the Mr. Man's Country contest, with "talent" events. The 1st entrant performed a Fleet Enema commercial, complete with demonstration. From there, it was all downhill.

The Mr. Gold Coast Contest, at 90 minutes, was the most fun. The goodlooking hunks paraded in everything from jockstraps to sailor's whites. Winner Dan Lauing, an audience favorite, flexed his striking abdominal muscles in the dark 1st floor of the bar.

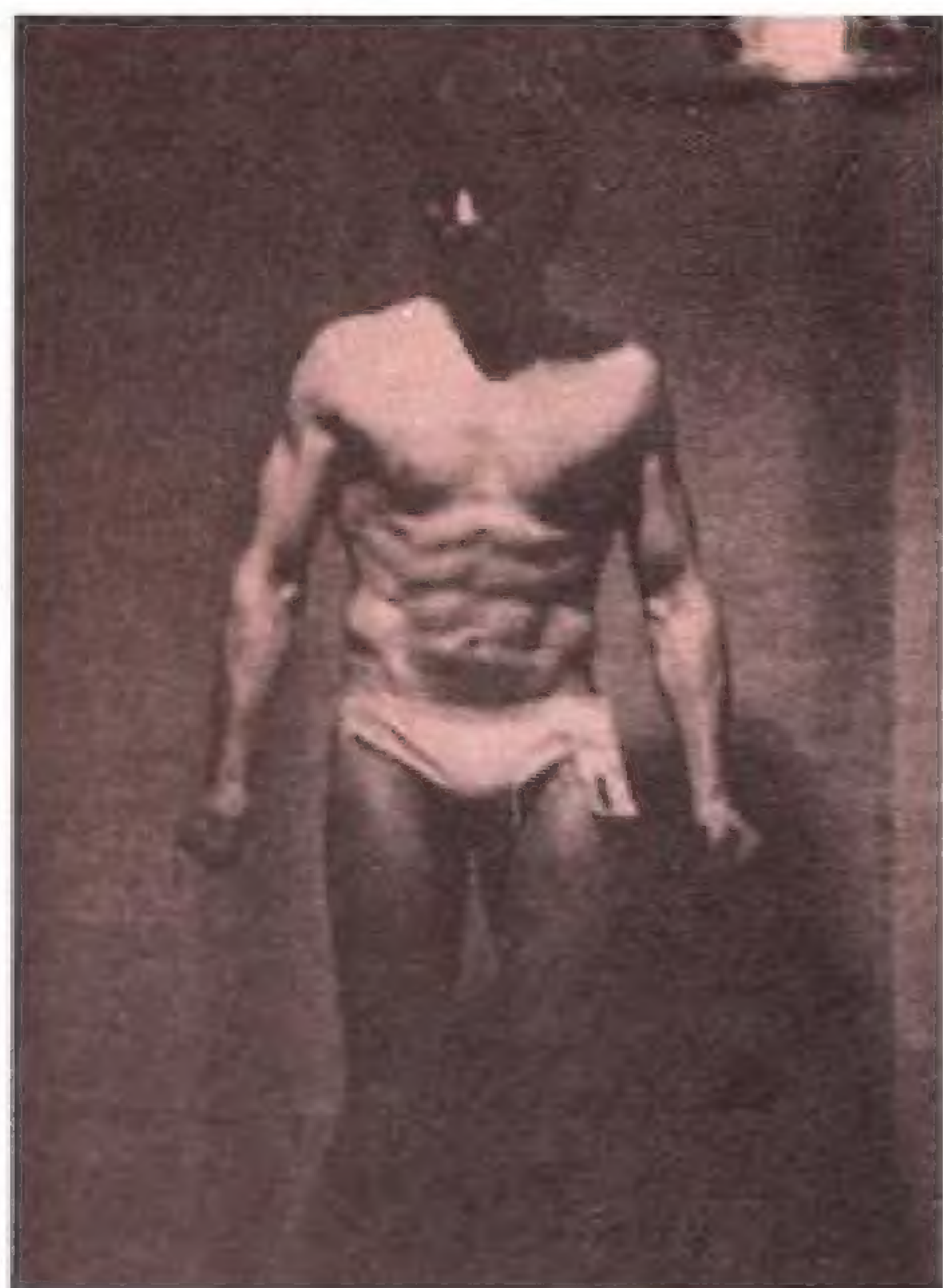


Photo by Chuck Nitti

Dan Lauing, Mr. Gold Coast 1977

A new bath, the Steamworks, has opened here on N. Lincoln Ave. The 2nd floor facilities has the standard rooms, lockers, steam and sauna.

For those planning a summer trip, take note that unlike Manhattan, Chicago has beautiful Lake Michigan on the east side. The Lake and notorious Lincoln Park are a short walk from New Town, Chicago's answer to N.Y.'s Greenwich Village and West L.A.'s Boys' Town.

The park and lakefront have great bike paths and if one's leg muscles are up to it, a cyclist can pedal from Evanston to the South Shore, a 2-hour journey.

For after dark liaisons, you may like the bushes, a Lincoln Park cruising area near Fullerton Ave. Cops patrol there, but the usual routine is shining their spots and announcing on megaphones, "The park is closed. Please leave." The red-faced "nature lovers" scatter like roaches, but are back within minutes.

Though Belmont Rocks is not for nudists, the afternoon antics of the jaded sun-lovers is an eye-opener. Beer, grass, blankets and yards of nylon-tricot dominate the scene with little swimming, and much gazing.

The smaller drinking spots click in late afternoons with after-the-beach crowds. The Bushes is popular — an unpretentious, friendly N. Halsted St. bar with a new backyard patio. If you like young businessmen, Alfie's is very popular on Mondays with bargain-basement-priced drinks.

Man's Country Baths has a super sundeck, surrounded by a high fence, for those craving an "all-over tan." Each Sunday is Sun Day, with lockers reduced to \$2.50 from 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

—Bill Lumen

## boston

After 2 years of intensive fund-raising and P.R., the Massachusetts Center Repertory Co. has finally opened, with the "Dance of Death," August Strindberg's existential dilation upon the inextricableness of love, hate, and boredom. This play was the prototype of "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf," and Colleen Dewhurst and Ben Gazzara, the 2 stars of last season's success with the latter play, were brought back as the virulent Swedish captain and his bitter wife.

It was hard to judge the performances of Dewhurst and Gazzara, because the director had no idea what the play was about, on what levels it worked, in what ways it could be effective. There was no structure, no rhythm, no density, no nuance, no meanness, no tenderness, no understanding. The scene in the 2nd act in which Dewhurst forces her would-be lover to grovel and kiss her foot was no more absorbing or stressed than was the game of euchre in the 1st act. The play itself is a fine piece of literature, and when well-staged, is harrowing; but the audience couldn't be convinced that

it was not silly, wretched, and boring. We point a resolute finger at the director, who was minutely culpable for every excruciating moment.

Now, this Massachusetts Center Repertory Co. is a strange proposition. A triumvirate of producers have managed to raise the money for their premiere season of "serious" plays, which include as well Shaw's "Candida" and "Long Day's Journey Into Night." These men talk in interviews of the difficulty of 1st seasons, and the need of Boston and New England for a resident co. of high caliber. But to fill the seats of the vast theatre they've got, they must truck in stars from N.Y. as crowd-gatherers, belying their claim to be a Massachusetts company. Such a practice might be excused because of economic necessity, but why then also fill the artistic and tech jobs (director, designer, costumer) with N.Y. people too, when just as much talent is within shouting distance of the Shubert boxoffice?

The fact is, Boston is a provincial city, and will remain secondary to nearby Manhattan. It's only sensible to trade upon the charm of the provinces. Theatre-goers who want big names and blockbuster musicals can always weekend in N.Y. to satisfy their tastes. Boston theatres might then be left free to develop a truly indigenous theatre.

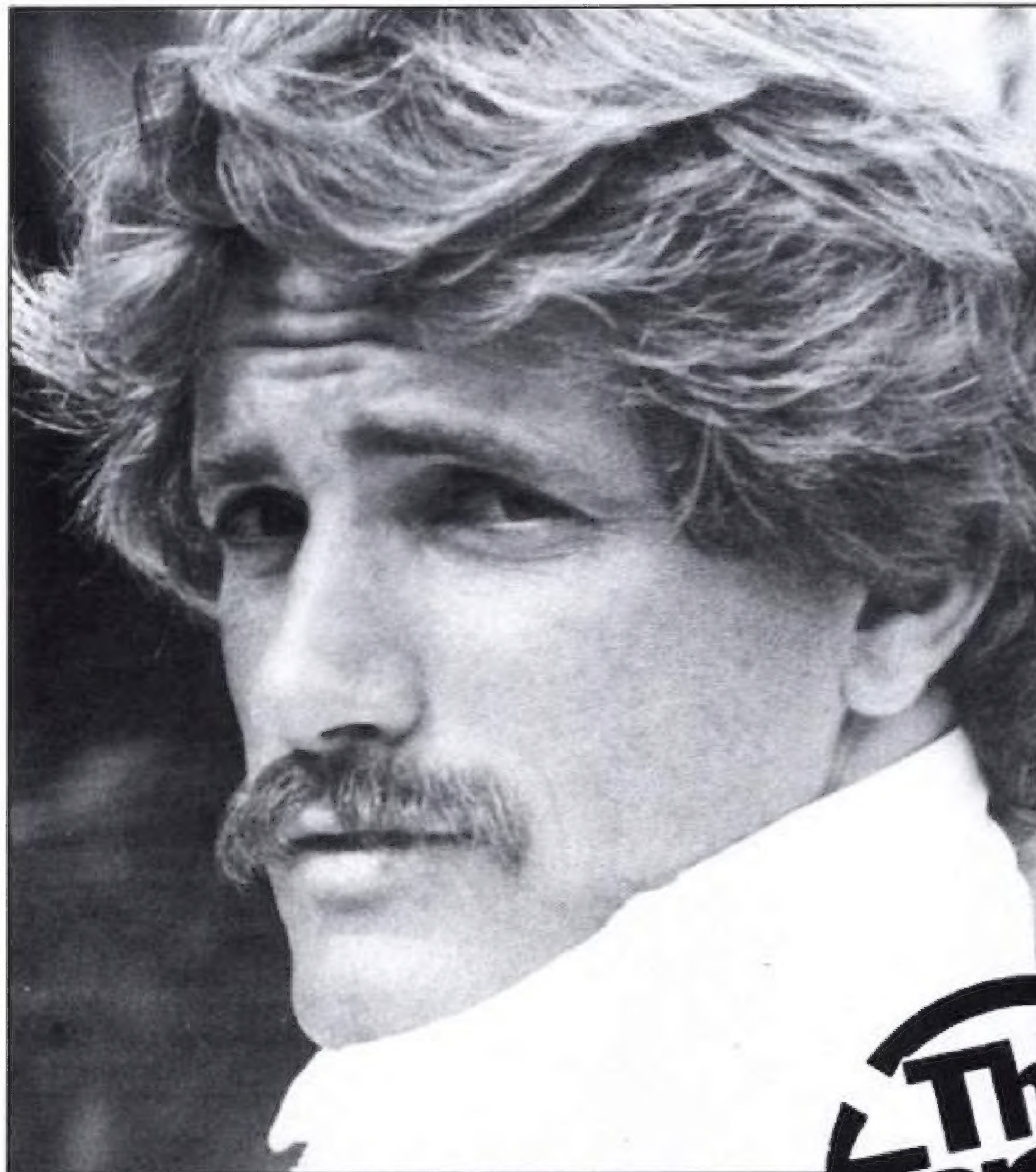


Photo by John Lindquist

Stephen Driscoll in "P.S. Your Cat Is Dead"

In contrast to the MCRC's fiasco, the Boston Repertory Theatre, a similar venture on a smaller scale — and with a much bigger heart — is currently in the happy position of constantly renewing its run of James





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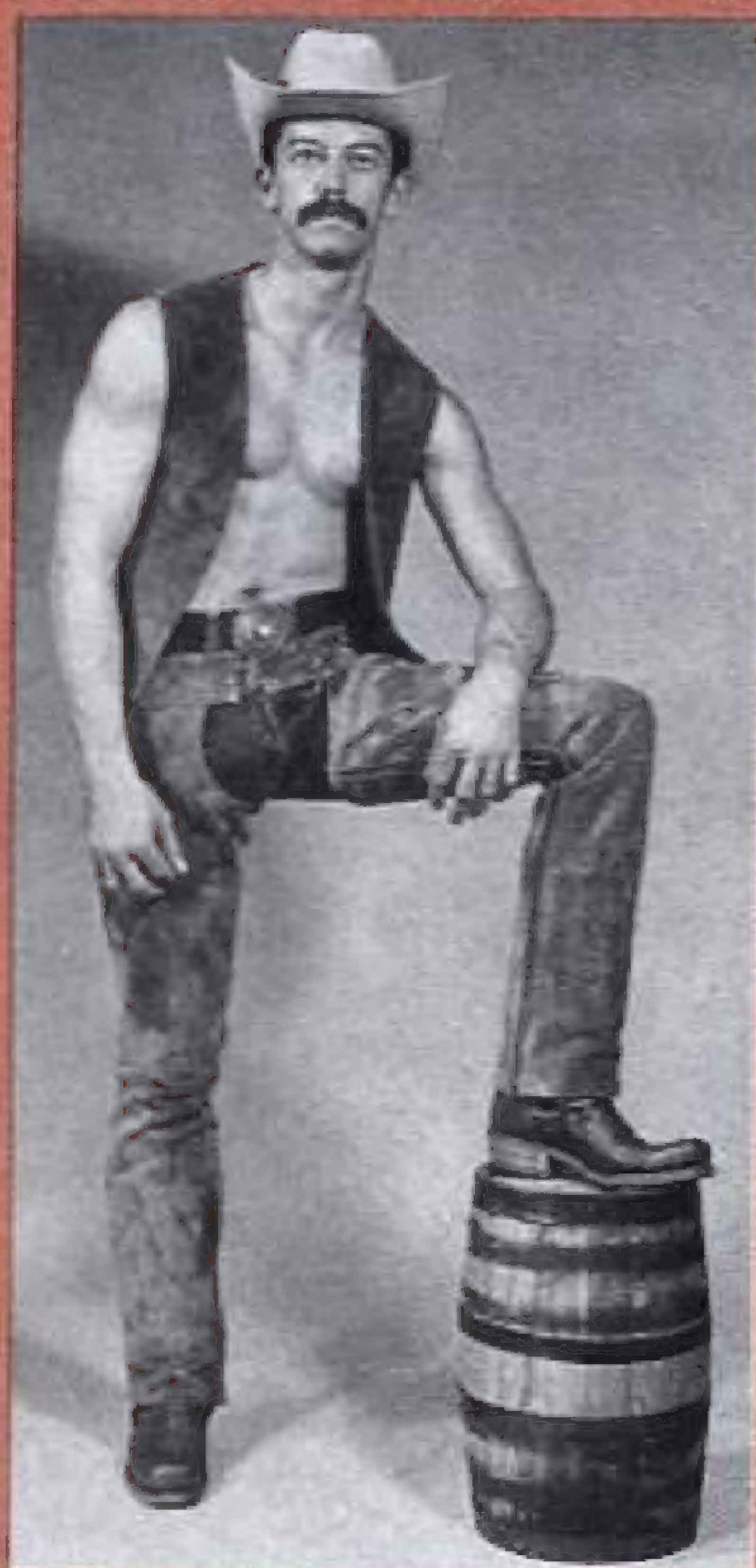
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Kirkwood's "P.S., Your Cat Is Dead," a delightful play competently and engagingly produced, directed, and acted. The tale of a distressed out-of-work actor who vents his frustrations on a bisexual burglar manages to be both frantic and charming. The gay community supported the play and made it a hit. Let's hope the Boston Rep continues to nurture their growing, loyal audience with other such modest, well-wrought, commendable productions.

—Joseph Cain

## atlanta

Does any city have more drag shows than Atlanta? County Seat has joined Sweet Gum Head, Locker Room Disco, Onyx and Chez Cabaret in offering nitely shows by femme impersonators.

Perhaps foremost is the Jewel Box Revue. When I saw Keith (Keith's Cruise Room, Hallandale, FL.) and Rene (Rene's, Tampa, FL.) in Mendel's Den at Encore, they said the revue is summering in Vegas after a long run in Miami. Keith soon had something else to shout about when his entry, Jose Ribo, won the Mr. Tampa and Mr. Gay Georgia titles.



Jose Ribo, Mr. Tampa & Mr. Gay Georgia

Atlanta's definition of "cabaret" is a show that's large in scale if not scope. With 5 running simultaneously here, lots of good young musical talent (and some not so young, like high-kicking sexagenarian Lit Connah and Wit's End founders Phil and Nancy Erickson) is finding a showcase. Manhattan Yellow Pages is offering "Puttin' on the Ritz," a high-stepping tribute to Irving Berlin, directed by David Bell.

Despite perfect picnic weather, Sunday brunches are still in style, with Gallus and Stephen's Saloon drawing crowds and with market prices still climbing, free coffee makes Club Atlanta the best deal in town, especially on \$1 nites. As remodeling continues, they've opened a sun deck, maze, and enclosed part of the pool.

A pool for watching while drinking is the draw of Happy Days, a new bar with dancing and games. It's from the owners of Encore, who realized their monopoly on the boogie biz could become unhealthy, if not boring. Upstairs at Encore, singer-pianist Toby Hall has appeared since April.

The Theater of the Stars summer musical season is half-set at press time; but set July 12 to Aug. 21 at the Civic Center are Shirley Jones ("The Sound of Music"), Ed Ames ("Shenandoah") and Rock Hudson ("Camelot").

Jan Peerce and Dominic Cossa lead cast of "Rigoletto," for the Georgia Opera, set for Symphony Hall July 28-30.

The Atlanta Symphony has named Louis Lane co-conductor and Hiroyuki Iwaki principal guest conductor, to assist music director and conductor Robert Shaw next season. Their "Pops in the Park" series this summer has Peter Nero, Henry Mancini, Marvin Hamlisch, Sergio Mendes and Brazil '77, Ferrante and Teicher and maybe Roberta Flack. Booked for the indoor "Mostly Music" series in Symphony Hall are Sarah Caldwell, Garrick Ohlsson, Jacques d'Amboise, Clymer Dale, Leonard Pennario and, in their first Atlanta freakout, Les Ballets Trockadero. The summer concerts continue 'til July 22.

Dizzy Gillespie gives a benefit concert June 16 at the Fox to kick off the Atlanta Kool Jazz Festival, but there won't be much jazz in the rest of the fest, June 17-18 in Atlanta Stadium. It includes Gladys Knight and the Pips, Natalie Cole, The

Photo by Steve Warren



Temptations, Johnnie Taylor, The Dramatics, Tavares, Lou Rawls, Wild Cherry, Albert King, Roy Ayers Ubiquity, Mighty Clouds of Joy and "Guest M/C," Jimmie Walker.

A warning to Yankees driving to Disney World this summer: If you stop off in Atlanta, you may forget about the rest of your trip (and it could be the best thing that ever happened to you)!

—Steve Warren

## philadelphia

With summer, the thoughts of Philadelphia's gays turn to Atlantic City. But there's still much action this side of the Delaware.

The Camp Williamsburg Inn, a private club, is still popular. It's a different kind of place — not just another bar. It's mainly a splendid restaurant (but there's a bar). The menu's varied and the food excellent, especially roast duck.

The atmosphere in the Inn is warm and friendly and several dining rooms match any mood. When supper's done, a piano bar awaits guests downstairs.

The Comeback bar's another friendly meeting place. In the heart of the central business district, it attracts a varied crowd. Drinks reasonably priced and more than likely some friendly stranger at the other end of the bar will send a drink to you.

For the very chic, Cafe Society is just right. Not a gay bar, but heavily patronized by gays, Cafe Society is an elegant nitery with top entertainment.

The Gay Coffeehouse, in Philadelphia's Gay Community Center, provides a fine place to spend the evening. It's recently expanded its schedule (to include Sundays) and live entertainment some nites and homebaked treats help to make the Coffeehouse on Kater St. one of the more popular spots.

—Joseph R. DeMarco

## los angeles

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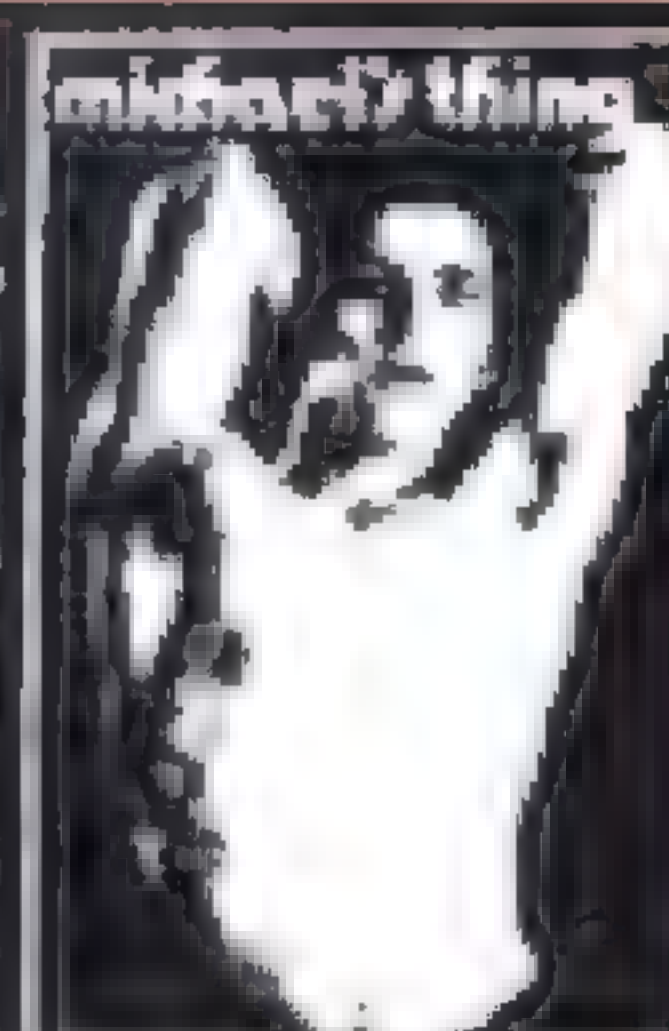
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ing headed West from N.Y. to make their fortunes in TV and films, has caused an off-Broadway-type theatre boom that rivals what happened on the East Coast during the '50s. Thruout L.A. are scores of small theatres of less than 100 seats (Actors' Equity union has relaxed its rules here to let members work for free in these operations), offering several productions of varying quality. Many are strictly "showcase" operations, spotlighting actors to TV and film casting directors and producers. Several, however, showcase new plays and have attracted some highly talented actors who want to keep in touch with the live theatre. There are 2 new plays that've surfaced recently that deserve more attention.

The 1st is "Oscar Wilde," by Eden Productions and P.S. Presents at the 50-seat Cast Theatre. Actually, this is an old play, written by Leslie and Sewell Stokes in '38, but this production incorporates for the 1st time publicly the original court transcripts of Wilde's trials in 1895. It's a sensitive and finely dramatic study of a man who felt he should be left in peace to pursue his gay pleasures in return for creating beauty. The play emphasizes his gayness, illustrating his passion for attractive young men, usually hustlers. But it's never sensational and shows how Wilde's spirit and creative energy were destroyed by rigid Victorian society. Directed with understanding and compassion by Mike Road, the show features a truly brilliant performance by Leon Charles in the title role. Terence Scammell is superb as Wilde's special friend, Lord Alfred Douglas ("Bosie") and there are equally fine performances by others. It deserves to be seen.

Another important event was the world premiere of "Persons Unclaimed," a new play by Gregory Rozakis that had a limited engagement at Theatre Rapport. The chief character is Bambi (fantastically portrayed by the playwright), a freaked-out gay who wanders the streets of Greenwich Village with a wild look in his eyes, picking up change thru whatever odd jobs he can find. Actually, the play is a series of events in the life of Bambi, including a hilarious graverobbing scene in a New Jersey cemetery and climaxing in a wild orgy at the docks.

Rozakis has written an outrageous black comedy, which may offend some people, but he's a writer of con-

siderable talent and his characters, all of whom are losers, are fascinating and presented with compassion. In addition to Rozakis, outstanding performances were given by Doris Dowling as a faded movie queen destroyed by the blacklist, Tara Tyson as her prostitute granddaughter, Jed Mills as a hustler and Paul Larson as the art deco antique dealer who digs his wares up in cemeteries. Frank Cavestani directed with a sure hand, easily combining dark humor and drama with a precise understanding of the characters and their milieu.

In other recent entries in larger theatres, Priscilla Lopez ("A Chorus Line") proved she's a top star of the brightest magnitude in the L.A. Civic Light Opera's new production of "Irma La Douce," which also starred the tremendously talented Larry Kert and George Irving (who was the delightful "Madam Luey" in "Irene"). Michael Kidd's direction and choreography added excitement and gave a fresh interpretation to the musical.

Carol Burnett and Dick Van Dyke (he'll join her TV show this fall) graced the boards of the Huntington Hartford in a limited engagement of Bernard Slade's funny comedy about adultery, "Same Time, Next Year." Burnett was particularly impressive, playing the character close to reality and letting the laughs come naturally. On TV, one has a tendency to associate Burnett with very broad, farcical comedy, but she proved she's also an actress capable of subtlety and depth.

The next CLO show, opening July 8, is "Annie Get Your Gun," with Debbie Reynolds and Harve Presnell, and directed and choreographed by Gower Champion.

—Ron Englert

## detroit

**O**ur long cold winter is finally over and Detroiters are preparing to do some heavy partying this summer.

Spring brought us two new bars, Five West and The Cove. Five West, sister bar of Stephen's Saloon, should be as exciting as Stephen's was, is and will be, with disco set in rustic surroundings.

The Cove is a nice, relatively quiet place for dancing, drinking, and

meeting new people. This summer the kitchen will be open so you can start the nite here with a good meal.

The already established bars are gearing up for summer too. Bookie's Club 870 (Gagen's) is holding the "Mr. Gay Detroit" contest; Menjo's, continuing disco dancing, will be holding parties thruout the summer; and the Gas Station has been remodeled into a very comfortable bar with the best in progressive disco music by D.J. Barry Bohannon.

Stephen's Saloon, after some remodeling and the installation of a new sound system, is better than ever — if that's possible! Again this year, Stephen's will be having Christmas and New Year's in July, on the 18th and 25th of that month.

Sundays here along Woodward Ave. are beginning to look and feel like Sunday afternoon along Castro in San Francisco. Stephen's still has "Breakfast at Tiffany's" at noon, and "Crazy Dazes" at 2 with drinks at special prices and a bar full of the hottest numbers around. Palmer Park, on the west side of Woodward Ave. is always great for sun and sights. At the north end of the Park is the Gas Station, with its Sundisco Champagne Party on Sunday afternoons.

Detroit is celebrating. We love summer and we love people. If you have any reason to be in Detroit we'd love to have you at our party. All we can guarantee you is a good time.

— Jimi Walters

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## MOVIES

**O**h, Orson, it's too long of a wait between classics. So F for Fake, Welles' 1st film in 5 years, has one's expectations too high for what is basically a docu-





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mentary. Welles apparently took over footage shot by French documentary filmmaker Francois Reichenbach on the island of Ibiza about Howard Hughes hoaxer Clifford Irving and Elmyr de Hory, the legendary art forger, and pulled it all together as editor, writer, director, commentator, and master of ceremonies. It has its moments, but how long must we wait for *The Other Side of The Wind*?

*Nasty Habits* is a film worth seeing. It's a Watergate story piously camped up in a Philadelphia nunnery—and a brilliant idea, based on Muriel Spark's novel *The Abbess of Crewe*. There's no point in going over the plot, since everyone in America knows it only too well, but it's awfully funny, made even funnier by great acting from Glenda Jackson as the Abbess, Melina Mercouri as a sort of good will ambassador trying to stay out of the mess, Geraldine Page and Anne Jackson as the Abbess' coverup conorts, and Sandy Dennis as the sad sack who gets sucked into the scandal. Her best role since she won an Oscar for supporting Virginia Woolf.

— John Roberts

If it were a musical, *Pumping Iron* would be called "Arnie" and there'd be a production number halfway thru with assembled bodybuilders arranging themselves in a Busby Berkeley pattern—a barbell, say—and serenade Arnold Schwarzenegger on his return to Gold's Gym after a brief absence. To wit: "Why, hello Arnie. Say, hello Arnie. It's so nice to have you back where you belong." Flex. Flex.

And Arnie, overcome with the mellifluous camaraderie of it all, moves center stage, the lights dim (star filter, please) and he'd respond: "I had a dream. A dream about me, baby. It's going to come true, baby. Cause everything's pumping up iron." Flex. Flex.

Well, You get the idea. *Pumping Iron* is quite decidedly about the championship trials and competitive tribulations of Schwarzenegger, self-proclaimed—the generally acknowledged—"numero uno" of world bodybuilders, 6 times Mr. Olympia and God-only-knows how many times Mr. America and Mr. Everywhere Else.

He's a star. There's no question about it. At 6 ft. 2, 240 lbs., the 28-year-old Schwarzenegger is a cross between Clark Gable and Mt. Rushmore. MON-U-MENT-AL.

He's also the quintessential win-

ner. And *Pumping Iron* is about the psychology of winning as much as anything.

Schwarzenegger likens himself to a sculptor. He is, in fact, one of the few bodybuilders ever exhibited at the Whitney Museum of American Art.

His artistry, however, consists in the obsessiveness of his commitment to do something better than it's ever been done before.

Anyone who enjoys expertise, who enjoys seeing a master craftsman at work—will enjoy *Pumping Iron* for the insight it affords into the mind of the artist. Also, not incidentally, Schwarzenegger's body is simply gorgeous. It's the most beautiful body in the world. Long may it pump.

— Barry Brennan

## MUSIC

Not the least of the problems of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice's *Evita* (MCA), a rock opera on the life of Argentina's Eva Peron, is the idiomatic disparity between its music and subject.

Though in many ways more ambitious and shrewdly designed than their "Jesus Christ Superstar," *Evita* focuses on a nationalist symbol, not a transcendent universal figure.

Nothing in their opera evokes a specific period, place or national character of its personalities, least of all its music, which lies somewhere between bubblegum rock and Elizabethan Christmas carols.

The happiest news of this record year has been the return of David Gates and the reformation of Bread with *Lost Without Your Love* (Elektra). The album has been certified gold, with 2 Gates-written singles, "Hooked On You" and the title track, headed for million sales.

Norman Harris' Gold Mind Records has latched on to the big talent and soul-soaring voice of Loleatta Holloway, who debuts on the label with *Loleatta*, a package as consistently danceable as it is heavy listening.

The most danceable are the Harris-produced cuts, but it is with producer Ron Kersey that Loleatta best demonstrates how brightly her torching can shine with "Worn Out Broken Heart" and "Is It Just A Man's Way."

Sammy Walker (Warners) is an



unpretentious folk singer from the mold of Guthrie and Seeger, who makes no bow to current or alien fashion in his second LP, his first for Warners. That integrity is not apt to capture immediate attention in a crowded marketplace, but fortunately Warners is one of the few companies willing to make long-range and long-term talent gambles. Time is on the side of purity here. On the basis of the 11 songs penned and performed by Walker, he could emerge a giant in a narrowing field that needs one.

The first 3 "stock options" in Motown's "Preferred Stock" series are the latest repackagings of riches from years and stars which built an empire. While the vein is rich, these tapings are arguable.

Glades Knight, The Spinners, The Marvellers and Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell spread the hits on the 1st and choicest set. The Four Tops, Michael Jackson, Mary Wells and Martha & The Vandellas take the 2nd, while Edwin Starr, Jr. Walker, The Temptations and Smokey Robinson and The Miracles split the 3rd and weakest collection.

Far more ambitious in this day of fast cut-outs and endlessly recycled oldies but goodies compendiums is RSO Records collectors series. The original 9 handsome repressings include prime Eric Clapton, a 2-record homage to Derek and the Dominos and 7 original ladlings by Cream, from *Fresh Cream* to *Blind Faith*, and including the 2-disk *Wheels of Fire*.


Today's Motown dilemma is aptly illustrated by *The Originals' Down To Love Town* which manifests the organization and production expertise in desperate need of a personality to front it.

The album sustains a lavish orchestral sound, fronted by anonymous group vocals which occasionally suggest The Four Tops and other groups, but none in particular. It's like a great background track waiting for an original star to step in and do the overdubs. Or like having the biggest, best and most comfortably heated — but sadly empty — waterbed.

*Light of Smiles* (Warners). Gary Wright's followup to the bullseye "Dream Weaver" is marred by a spacey, evangelic tone which leaves the listener feeling so overdosed on incense and apathy that only a fast


(continued on page 67)

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# Gene Thomas

Photography By JOHN MICHAEL COX, JR.



**H**is name is Gene Thomas. An Aries, this 24-year-old native New Yorker's life is consumed with a passion for modern dance. Unable to take advantage of a scholarship from the Harkness, he improves his footwork in clubs around town and in class. In the meantime, though, he's become an expert at silkscreening T-shirts and cooking (chicken's his specialty). But it's all those years of dance that've kept him trim and tight as these pictures by his friend John Michael Cox, Jr. show. And the discipline of dance has no doubt taught him persistence. And isn't that always the key?















# Van Johnson

By STEVE WARREN

At 60, he's still an incurable ham, name-dropper and going strong

Van Johnson is an incurable ham, eager to entertain an audience of any size, from one to infinity. His non-stop patter includes dropping the names of all the stars — from Lassie to Liza — that he did or didn't work with during his Hollywood years.

There are also constant references to his age (60 — but he could easily pass for 50 or less) and weight (over). He attributes the latter to having quit smoking 5 years ago, thanks to hypnotist Pat Collins.

And, yes, Johnson still has red hair and wears red socks.

At the press luncheon I attended, he punctuated every point by patting the leg of the (male) reporter on his right; the woman on his left went unmolested. From this we can conclude that Johnson is right-handed.

If you want to know "Whatever happened to . . . ?" anyone, Johnson's the Answer Van. A few examples

Dolores Del Rio: "She still looks like that. I see her when I go to Mexico. It's incredible. Beautiful woman

She's Indian — see, they don't change; but she eats like a truck driver."

Jane Wyman: "Good actress, nice lady. She's retired. She's up in Pebble Beach, Carmel, Monterey — around there . . . She looks like Grandma Moses now. She's let her hair go all white and keeps it short and looks just like Grandma Moses. But don't print that." (Oops!)

(I should point out that Johnson's requests not to be quoted are just his way of calling attention to something he's said that he knows is "good copy." He knows damn well we're going to print it.)

June Havoc: "She lives in Connecticut now . . . I'm very fond of June. I haven't seen her in years . . . June started me on good reading . . . She started me on the Book-of-the-





Month Club . . . It was fascinating. Of course, you had to read the god-dam dividends, too. Now I read 5 books a week. I'm an avid reader, thanks to June Havoc."

Jean-Pierre Aumont: "He's charming . . . He looks just like he did then."

Joan Crawford: "I never worked with Crawford, and we were always on the same lot. She's a good friend of mine; she lives in New York."

Ethel Merman: "I still type all my letters. Me and Ethel Merman . . . She's a good friend of mine. She types faster than I do — I could kill her. Ethel Zimmerman."

Elizabeth Taylor: "Since her marriage (to John Warner), she's fat. (Don't print that.) I hope this is for her — he's a hell of a man. She'll work it off, riding her horse across Virginia. But she'd better be careful; she's accident-prone. I remember when she came to MGM to do *National Velvet*. She was about 4. (12, actually.) The horse kept throwing her, all through the picture; and when it was finished, Mr. (Louis B.) Mayer made her a present of the horse. I asked him why he did it and he said, 'I had to get rid of it!' But you would always see Liz around the lot with her arm in a sling or a broken leg — we'd all have to sign the god-dam leg."

"People never write about all the good things she does, what a great humanitarian she is. When she was making *Cleopatra* in Italy, she had a villa; and she would leave instructions that if anyone asked for food, they weren't to be turned away. She was feeding half the Italian countryside!"

Someone else Johnson worked with at an early age — hers, not his — is Liza Minnelli. She was 2½ when, in 1949, she appeared in the final scene of *In the Good Old Summertime* as the daughter of Johnson and Judy Garland.

"She (Liza) didn't have any pants on that morning and she had a cold," Johnson recalls; "and Judy said, 'I'm gonna blast the roof off of this studio if she catches any more cold!' I said, 'Well, wouldn't she catch a cold, she's got no pants on!' So when I had to pick her up, they were running all over the studio trying to find that size panties for her."

"She hates for me to tell that story. Sorry, Liza."

Van Johnson was born Aug. 25, 1916, in Newport, R.I. ("Bette Davis and I are always talking about our

New England background.") He says Swedish was the first language he spoke: "Then my grandmother died, we never spoke it again. You don't go to Berlitz to learn Swedish at my age!"

Describing his early life, he says, "I was a child of divorce in a small town in Rhode Island . . . I guess I always felt different." Movies were his main source of entertainment and escape: "I decided I wanted to be one of those people up there entertaining people — not in movies. I thought then, but on the stage."

"I would pick the Depression to go to New York with five dollars in my pocket . . . but I knew I had to get out of that small town."

He got his first break, he says, at the Cherry Lane Theatre in Greenwich Village, with a company that included "Robert Walker and Phyllis Isley, who became Jennifer Jones." He made it to Broadway as one of the "New Faces of 1936" and stayed to do "Too Many Girls" and "Pal Joey."



At MGM, 1956

"You know who I was hoofing next to (in "Pal Joey")?" he asks. "Two guys: one was Richard Irving, who's

now head of TV at Universal; the other was Stanley Donen, who is now, as we all know, a great director."

It was *Too Many Girls*, with Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz, that brought Johnson to Hollywood, and Ball — not Spencer Tracy, as is often reported — who introduced him to MGM. "I was gonna go back to New York," he says. "She took me to dinner at Chasen's with Desi . . . and in walks Billy Grady, the talent scout. And she says, 'Billy, this kid can't go back to New York.'" Grady, he says, told him, "Stop by the studio (MGM) on your way to the depot."

"Well, I did, and the rest is history; I never made the train."

Although he isn't complaining — it's a good excuse to work some more names into the conversation — Johnson says he's still paying for that favor: "Whenever I go to Philadelphia, Lucy asks me to send her some scrapple — a case, not a package but a case, of scrapple . . ."

"My father said, 'If you ever saw how it was made, you'd never eat it again!' Gloria Swanson said, 'If you ever saw how a hot dog was made, you'd never eat one again.' Well, I happen to be a junkie about hot dogs. And knockwurst. I guess I like everything — since I quit smoking."

Johnson spent 12 years at MGM: "As soon as I walked through those gates, I knew I was home." His first film there was *Somewhere I'll Find You*. It starred Clark Gable and was interrupted for weeks by the death of Carole Lombard.

"It was terrifying," Johnson says of the experience. "I was terrified of Gable. Of course, I felt sorry for him 'cause he was just coming out of that terrible thing; he never did get over it . . . He was a big star. I used to write him fan letters, and there I was doing a scene with him!"

Among the stars Johnson wishes he had worked with but didn't, he lists "Garbo, Claudette (Colbert), Barbara Stanwyck. They weren't MGM. (Garbo was, but retired the year before Johnson arrived at the studio.) You see, we had to — pardon the expression — play with each other."

Although Spencer Tracy didn't introduce Johnson to MGM, they made several films together there and became good friends. "He's my mentor," Johnson says of Tracy. "They don't make guys like him anymore. He was a marvelous man. Tortured and tormented — but who

(continued on page 71)



# A. E. Housman

By ROBERT K. MARTIN



**T**he most popular and beloved poet of modern England, A. E. Housman, is in many ways the least known of all poets. Though *A Shropshire Lad* continues to sell long after his death, the man who wrote it out of his own suffering and thwarted love remains an enigma. Housman, late in life, was offered the job of England's Poet Laureate, but refused. The refusal was typical. He just preferred to be left alone, and gained a reputation as a recluse and misanthrope.

Housman saw his poetry as secondary to his real work, his scholarship in Greek and Latin. He spent most of his professional life on a scholarly edition of a little-known Latin writer, Manilius, whom Housman considered 3rd rate. The choice was as perverse as the dedicatory poem Housman composed in Latin for the former Oxford athlete now teaching in India, Moses Jackson. Jackson's copy was bound in morocco, edged in gilt, and mailed by Housman himself, in a singular act of homage and love.

Housman met Jackson when they were students at Oxford in 1877. Jackson was a handsome member of

the crew of St. John's College, noted for his burly good looks and jovial manners. Housman was a shy, quiet student of poetry and the classics. He lived a life of almost unimaginable correctness and calm. There was only one jarring note in his otherwise monastic rooms — a photograph of the St. John's crew, kept on the wall until his death.

All papers, letters, and etc., which might have revealed the nature of the relationship between Housman and Jackson have disappeared or been destroyed — by Housman himself, his family or Jackson's. We do not know exactly what happened between the young men, but we do know that it inspired all of Housman's best work, determined him to a course of life in which emotional expression was reserved for poetry, a perpetual memorial to the love he bore for Jackson, and that it perhaps sent Jackson fleeing across the world, first to India, then to British Columbia, but never beyond the reach of correspondence and continual reminder of Oxford, Housman, and their friendship.

Perhaps a crisis occurred early in the relationship, and one can

speculate that it happened because of the impossibility of turning Housman's emotional attraction into sexual reality. A common view. Or, more likely, one can suggest that Jackson and Housman did enjoy a deep and probably sexual relationship, like those common in English schools and universities, but that Jackson emerged from it seeking a more heterosexual life, while Housman remained faithful to his friend. Whatever, something happened that caused the brilliant Housman to fail, inexplicably, his examinations in 1881 (he arrogantly and/or suicidally refused to answer many of the questions, just as he refused to follow the set list, and instead created his own reading program).

Whatever happened at Oxford, the split between the two wasn't complete, for the next year Housman took a job in the London Patent Office, and took a flat with Jackson and his younger brother Adalbert. The strange ménage lasted four years, until Housman took a separate flat and Jackson left for Karachi, to return briefly, only once, to marry. Housman recorded Jackson's depar-



ture in a fragmentary poem he didn't publish:

To put the world between us  
We parted stiff and dry  
"Good-bye," said you, "forget  
me."  
"I will, no fear," said I.

After 10 years of love, perhaps from afar, Housman was forced to pretend that he didn't cry at Jackson's departure, even though he said it "tore my heart in sunder." His poetry-writing career began about this time and remained his way of transforming his grief into art and made a permanent tribute to lost love.

The first poem in Housman's notebook (now printed as Number XI, in *A Shropshire Lad*) recalls the sense of loss that underlay all his poetry. The poet thinks back to the "land of lost content," but sees "The happy highways where I went / And cannot come again." The biographical source of the poem is the poet's loss of the world he had with Moses Jackson, the world of youthful pleasures, but the poem's universalized by identification with all such senses of loss. In Housman's work what is lost is always at least threefold: 1. the loss of love, and particularly the loss of Jackson; 2. the loss of the English countryside as a new industrial world takes over; and 3. the loss of a classical ideal, including the Roman doctrine of Stoic acceptance and the Greek cult of physical beauty, identified in its highest form with the body of a young man. The second is perhaps the one most familiar to students recalling the odd Housman poem from an anthology (as in "Loveliest of trees, the cherry now"), but the three were always linked in Housman's mind and work. The land of lost content is a rural England of happy, jostling "lads," but it's also the Oxford of 1877-1881, and it is the Greece of the Late-Victorian imagination, as seen in such a work as Wilde's *Dorian Gray* (1891).

The second poem from Housman's notebook, now number XIV of *A Shropshire Lad*, is an even bleaker vision of the poet's isolation from love. He records his sense of total despair in the memorable lines

Ah, past the plunge of plummet,  
In seas I cannot sound.  
My heart and soul and senses,  
World without end, are drown-  
ed.

The repeated p's and s's give particular intensity to these lines, like the sense of reduplication, and of going beyond the conceivable, conveyed by "past the plunge of plummet." The bitter irony of the phrase from the Creed in the last line marks the horror of this poem, the sense that suffering is eternal. Housman had early lost his faith, and never regained it. All of his poems gain a heightened sense of despair from the fact that death will bring no release, no resurrection, and no redemption. It is horrible enough to suffer in this world if one hopes for reward in the next; how much more horrible to suffer the eternal pains of loss and separation in a world without end. The man who suffers like this, Housman says, is the man "That gives to man or woman / His heart and soul away."

For Housman, Moses Jackson was dead. He'd returned to London, but only to marry and depart again with his wife, and Adalbert Jackson, who had to some extent replaced his brother in Housman's affections, was dead, too, in 1892. Little wonder then that so many of the *Shropshire Lad* poems are written as poems to dead young men. The young men had all gone, off to war or off to marriage, and Housman remained to preserve their memory. Probably his most famous poem, and one of his best, is "To An Athlete Dying Young," a poem modelled on the Greek Olympic poems, in which the winning runner was rewarded by, among other tributes, a poem written by an older man who chose him as his lover. Housman's poem uses this classical convention (which one wishes could be revived for the next Olympics!) but he also gives an ironic tone to the poem by portraying the death of the athlete.

Housman's poem proposes that the fame of athletics is brief — the laurel "withers quicker than the rose." So the athlete who dies while still triumphing preserves his laurels, saves them from time and neglect. His victory is permanent because his death preserves it from time, change, and loss. He will not be like those other lads "that wore their honours out, / Runners whom renown outran

And the name died before the man." In death his garland is "unwithered." The poem is clearly a tribute to Moses Jackson, whose "death" has preserved him, kept his memory pure. For Housman the



Illustration By M. HART

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# MYSTERIES

**fiction by Richard Hall**

I like mysteries. That's quite an admission from an English teacher. But the way I see it, mystery is a bigger category than some people think. It's not just Sam Spade and Agatha Christie. *Everything* is a mystery — why we get up in the morning, why one face is beautiful and not another, why we dream, love sunsets, hate broccoli.

That's why this particular April morning, the headline in the *N.Y. Times* caught my eye. It gave off flashing rays of mystery from top to bottom:

**WELL-KNOWN DESIGNER  
FOUND SLAIN IN  
LAVISH EAST SIDE  
TOWNHOUSE**

The subhead in smaller type did the same thing:

**Nude Body Handcuffed To Bed,  
No Sign of Forced Entry**

I read on, forgetting my toast and coffee.

"Billy Broadbent, 60, a prominent fashion designer, had been dead for three days when found by the police. An autopsy showed he died of asphyxiation by strangling. The murder weapon was a tieback from one of his drapes. A squad of five detectives from 4th Homicide Zone, under Lt. Errol Flynn, was on the premises today."

Errol Flynn? Now where did he get a name like that? Did his Irish mom have a lech for the king of the pirates, back in the '40s? Did she name her son after him and how did his old man feel about it? Mysteries, mysteries...

"Scores of photos of young men were found in the victim's bedroom. The police speculated that a steady companion might have committed the crime."

I thought about that as I poured fresh coffee. Most murders, I know, are committed by someone close to the victim. But gay murders are different. Our traffic in strangers is unique to us — touching our lifestyle, you might say. Wouldn't the police do better to comb the bars and restaurants in the neighborhood? Also the street? Broadbent, I noticed, lived on East 54th, right near hustler heaven.

Cord McGreevy, hero of *THE BUTTERSCOTCH PRINCE*, tackles a new crime... his first appearance outside the pages of the highly-acclaimed best-seller by Richard Hall, in a story written especially for *IN TOUCH*!

## About The Author:

*Richard Hall is a Harvard graduate who has worked as a teacher, editor, and filmmaker until the success of his first mystery novel, The Butterscotch Prince, convinced him to quit the workaday world and pursue writing full-time. He has just finished his second novel and has written a full-length play, The Love Match, the story of a movie star who promises to star in the film version of a gay novel (about two athletes) but at the last minute, backs down. The play had a three-week run at The Clines in New York to enthusiastic audiences and at press time, Hall was in rewrites for later productions. In his mid 40s, he is a contributing editor of The Advocate, and has written for Christopher Street, Saturday Review, The Village Voice, The New York Times, and others. Here, in an exclusive short story to IN TOUCH, Hall continues the adventures of Cordell McGreevy, hero of The Butterscotch Prince.*

Trisha, my dachshund, gave a well-bred sigh and I glanced at the clock. Eight o'clock, 15 minutes late for her morning stroll. If I didn't hurry I'd be late for school, I gave the article a last scan. One of the detectives, describing the bedroom, which was done entirely in eggplant purple, said it was filled with 18th-century clocks. "It looked like something out of the palace in Madrid," he told the reporter.

Well, how do you like that? A detective who knows his palaces. Who says the world is predictable, even the world of 4th Homicide?

While I was walking Trisha, I discovered that a sentence from the article was knocking around my head. One of the Broadbent's friends had said of him: "He had been drinking heavily in recent months and didn't seem to know what he wanted out of life." Funny, that sentence even came upstairs and into the bathroom with me, where I had to shave in a hurry. *He didn't seem to know what he wanted out of life.* My forehead went cold, maybe the cold sweat of recognition. Maybe something to do with Avery going back to California and my waking up alone each day.

When I sleep alone I tend to scrunch up on the far edge in a foetal crouch. I guess you could make quite a symbolic case out of that, but why bother?

Avery left 37 days and 10 hours ago. Time to go back to the coast and renew his contacts at the major studios. Make something happen with the film script he'd been peddling for so long. That's what he said... and it was true. But it wasn't all that was true.

Why can't two guys who really care for each other stay together forever? Is there just an allotted time, a finite portion of the clock, when everything works? And after that... splitsville? Another mystery.

I didn't make a big scene when Avery left, although we both knew he wouldn't come back to live — not for a long time. What was the use? We always knew that one day it would finish — end of reel, chapter the last. Why throw the dishes or break the chairs? It wasn't really our style. But, my God, I hated waking up alone after two years of wading into sleep with his hand in mine.

I had been staring at myself in the mirror, not even lathering up. Generally, I like what I see, but today I didn't. The blue of my eyes was veiled and watery, as if I had been swimming in bad dreams too long. My face, normally oval, was positively emaciated. Even my posture — I'm six feet and generally proud of it — was poor. I was beginning to look like a question-mark.

Friends are good for many things



and one of them is to listen to your troubles. I have different friends for different troubles — romantic, creative, financial. Also friends for different highs. But today I was having a drink with Cosmo Slatkin. I wanted to tell Cosmo about the novel I was writing without too much success. English teachers are always writing dumb plays and novels. This one was coming out with all the speed of a baby elephant in a breech birth.

Cosmo is a short man with a round face generously emblazoned with moles. He works behind the camera in a TV production house. I usually watch Cosmo's moles for signs of sympathy. Tonight, as usual, I was rewarded. As I told him how my writing had lost its sizzle since Avery left, his best mole — the one next to his nose — went from brown to strawberry. That proved that Cosmo's veins were really working for me.

"C'mon, Cord, you're a teacher, not a writer. You shouldn't try to write until summer, when you have a big chunk of free time."

Well, that was a comforting thought. Two more months and school would be over. A cabin in the hills above Woodstock, mornings at the typewriter, evenings in the local disco . . . Damn, I was trying to do two jobs at once. No wonder I was having trouble.

I looked at Cosmo gratefully. What a man! What a mole!

Feeling better than I had all day — a couple of Black Russians helped — I decided to walk around the neighborhood before heading back to the Village. I had said goodbye to Cosmo at the corner of 49th and Lex (a good warm hug, fuck the stare of the attache crowd) and started walking north. After a few steps I realized I wasn't far from the Broadbent townhouse. Just about five blocks north and two east. Why not? Besides, I could make a scenic detour through Third Avenue in the fifties — hustler territory.

I hit the turf about 5:30, just when the early love traffic was peaking. The French have a name for this — the *cinq-a-sept*. The after-work screw. Intelligent, the French.

The first young man I passed was sitting on a brick wall in front of an antique shop. He was simply dressed — a pair of jeans and a T-shirt hanging over one shoulder. His bare chest was smooth. It looked as if it were fresh from Michelangelo's chisel. He caught my eye and cracked his massive jaw in a smile. God! It made me feel like I was back in high school and the captain of the football team was

making a pass at me. "Whaddya say?" His tone was manly and all-American and my knees gave a wobble. I hurried on, cursing the Black Russians and my prejudice against hustlers.

The next signal came from a powerful bearded man wearing a cowboy hat and high-heeled boots. He was leaning in a doorway. His face was a combination of sweet and sinister — sort of Grand Rapids crossed with Palermo. When he saw me looking, he thumbed his crotch lightly. I was aware of straining denim cloth. My stomach sank like the British pound and I hurried on.



I walked on, thinking about Avery and the empty apartment. Why wasn't I home correcting papers? Why the hell was I wasting the evening checking out the male whores on my way to the premises of a murder?

"Nice night, huh?"

The voice came from the right. I turned quickly. A shy smile on a face the color of cinnamon. Large, lustrous eyes. A pony that my grandfather gave me when I was 12 had the same velvety glance. "Yeah, nice."

He quickened his pace so we were abreast. I was aware of bony shoulders drawing down to slender hips, coarse black hair piled high in a shag cut. A gold cross glittered in his left ear. "You just walkin' around?"

How many answers I could give to that one! "Yeah. I don't get up here too much. I live in the Village."

His dim smile built up to a hundred watts. "I'm crazy about the Village. I go there all the time. Whereabouts?"

I breathed deeply. Better get rid of him now, fast. This wasn't going to go anywhere. "Charles Street. What's your name?"

"Sammy." Then he gave it the full Spanish pronunciation. "Sam-oo-ell," throwing back his shoulders and pushing up an extra inch. "I'm Puerto Rican," he added. That got the full Spanish treatment too. Then, laughing, he unzipped his nylon jacket. The T-shirt underneath had some Spanish words on it. He tapped them. "Means I love Puerto Rico."

It was impossible not to laugh too, sharing his pride. But just then we turned onto the 54th and I saw the Broadbent house, a Beaux-Arts beauty in Vermont limestone. It stood completely alone on a half-block lot cleared of all other structures. It seemed a little lonely, I thought, stripped of its buddies on both sides.

Sammy looked at the house with me, though I didn't explain why I had come. After a while he dug one toe across a crack in the sidewalk. "I liked you after I seen you," he said.

I looked at him. His big eyes were full of . . . what? Loneliness? Lust? Dollar signs? "Just for kicks," he whispered.

Suddenly the words I had forgotten for most of the day came back. *He didn't know what he wanted out of life.* Well, hell, I thought, I know . . . exactly. I want this sweet hunk standing next to me. I want him in my home, in my bed, in my arms.

"Okay, Sammy," I said. "Let's go."

As soon as we got home, we went to the bedroom. No talk, no messing around with drinks or coffee. I pulled the bamboo blinds and a warm gloaming enveloped us. I felt almost hypnotized as Sammy peeled off his clothes, as if some kind of sacred ritual were starting. Sex can make you feel that way. I know, but it hadn't . . . not for quite a while.

He folded his clothes neatly, putting them on the bureau, and when he turned to face me I saw that my first impression of slenderness had been misleading. In the nude, he was broad and strongly built, the flesh packing the skin, molding it into long, muscle-laden forms. A drift of coarse black hair spread from the gully of his chest to the nipples, which stood out like tiny gumdrops. His navel was the centerpiece of a hard mounded belly. The skunk-stripe of hair, a vertical down his abdomen, deepened and broadened at his groin, then gave way to a slowly lengthening bronze cannon. I moved in, fitting the cannon into the

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A popular geographic myth has it that nobody was ever born in D.C. Meeting a *bona fide* Washington native engenders the same feeling as would encountering J. Edgar Hoover's pet cock! The city's an anthropological crazy quilt of bureaucrats, higher echelon legislators, military, tourists, and gypsies (such as this writer), who are somehow simply here, and who are perennially planning to leave "next year for sure."

Much of Washington's population is suburban. Being a small patch of land nestled on the Potomac, in between the states of Virginia (motto, if you can imagine the chutzpah: "Virginia is for lovers"), and Maryland ("Maryland is for crabs"), at least half the cars in its streets bear those license plates. The suburbs are a popular place to live because they're less expensive but, even in 1977, there are those conservative straights who fear the big black population, the libertarian ways of urban folk, and who myopically maintain that the city is a dangerous place. T'aint so, say the statistics.

Architecturally, we're an oddity—look ma, no skyscrapers! In 1894, the construction of a 12-story hotel, The Cairo, caused concern in Congress

for the welfare of the many historical monuments around town. In the short span of nine bureaucratic years, a "footage" law was passed limiting the height of buildings inside city limits.

So, "The District" (sic) is a strangely sawed-off city where tourists may not be identified by the tilt of their chins.

The short (maximum 10-stories) buildings create an effect that's unique in a large metropolis: the sun is allowed to bathe the streets — spring is particularly stunning! Designed by Pierre L'Enfant on the same plan which he used to create gay Paree, D.C. is a broad, breathing configuration of bright, blooming parks and broad avenues which boldly dissect its formation. The cherry blossom festival on the tidal basin is the highlight of springtime, the beautiful blooming cherry trees a gift from Japan. Brief cold snaps can occur after this — local weather is like the little girl with the curl: when she was good, she was very, very good, but when she was bad, she was horrid! Mark Twain succinctly described our weather when he said, "If you don't like Washington weather, just wait a few minutes!"

On the far western end of town is

# Washington, D.C.





legendary Olde Georgetown, a distinctive city within a city where, in restored expensive townhouses, the **creme de la creme** of Washington society reside, and where the rest of the population come for good times — to ride bikes up and down the C&O canal, or to shop, or just to stroll hand-in-hand, high and happy. M Street and Wisconsin Ave. are a people-watcher's heaven.

The bad news: bring, or plan to rent, a car. D.C. has the single most execrable public transportation system in the world!

Gay? Well, rather! 150,000 of us at last guesstimate. D.C. is the most comfortable place in the country for a gay to live. Legislation has been in effect for several years banning employment or housing discrimination; the vice squad, if not truly abolished, has at least been driven into its own closet. Entrapment is ostensibly not a threat (knock wood and remain discreet) nor are police allowed in back rooms of adult bookstores unless summoned for non-sexual problems. "The Block" (details later) has, in fact, been a common issue over which The Gay Activist's Alliance, police, and local residents have met to negotiate!

Coming here? Three things to do

right away: 1) check in at 1724 20th St., N.W., headquarters of the gay ghetto. Lambda Rising, a large gay bookstore is there, and, in it the book, *Just Us*, a comprehensive guide to gay D.C., may be purchased. The book's old, but is being updated. It's the best guide available; 2) pick up a free copy of *The Blade*, our monthly gay paper; and 3) call Gay Switchboard (638-4611) for info on the latest nite spots and meetings of gay groups which you may want to visit.

Gay nitelife is gerrymandered into five areas of the city. The newest cruise bars are above Georgetown on upper Wisconsin Ave., The Barbary Coast (2412), and The Court Jester (2321). The Georgetown Grill, on lower Wisconsin, is one of the oldest bars in the city. It's recently changed hands, but the new owners say they want a gay clientele. Local gays seem a little paranoid about it right now, but The Grill was once our busiest bar.

Heading east, you'll come to the DuPont Circle area and, if it's dinner time, the place is P Street between 21st and 22nd. The Fraternity House has fine food from the beef family in an attractive atmosphere at reasonable (but not cheap) prices.

The remainder of the evening is cruisy and the entertainment on the upper level hopefully has improved since last reports. There is a bookstore up there, too, which I've never found to be open. Directly across the street, intimate Mr. P's has good food, too, and, having dined, one may be wise to spend the rest of the evening in this crowded (yeaah — body to body) cruisy place. Quite popular.

If you don't want to cruise where you eat (is there something strange about that phrase?), head across town to the "ninth street corridor." At the top, 9th St. N.W. at K, The Eagle-In-Exile, a new wing of The Eagle (9th at I), a Washington legend (N.Y. and Boston, too), has a dancefloor without peer, small and crowded! I'm positive the management keeps the heat up in order to provoke all that shirtlessness! Oddly, many gay folk here still don't understand The Eagles. They are not an exclusive club, not limited to leather or S&M types, but open to all . . . and you can, too, get in wearing sweaters and loafers (though one room at The Eagle is reserved for leather-wearers, even that door is sometimes unattended). The atmosphere is a trip! Men from all walks of life, all ages,

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By FRANK AKERS

Photography by GEORGE SIMMS





# the nude art of JOE JOHNSON

By JEREMY HUGHES

**J**oe Johnson, the retiring artist of these superb drawings, is much less at ease with the spoken word than with pencil or pen. Interviewed in his comfortably-cluttered aerie above Sunset Blvd., with Mount Wilson braving the smog to the east and the grandly tacky Hollywood sign to the north, he was soft-spoken to the point of inaudibility, reticent as a recluse.

Asked, for example, to tell about his background, early years, and schooling, he economically compressed some 3 decades into one sentence: "Well, I'm originally from Montana, and I studied at Montana State University and finished with a degree in Secondary Education; went on from there to Portland, Oregon, and spent 3 years there; and then I came on down to California."

A patiently insistent probing for

details pries loose the facts that yes, Joe Johnson did study Art, which is what he taught in Portland, and what brought him to L.A. was a teaching job at Grant Beach School of Arts and Crafts. "Then I went into neon sign designing," he volunteers, surprisingly. "I don't know why I did that — money, I guess. When I was in school I disliked lettering very much, but when I started working with the sign company — I guess it













was the creativity — I found out that I liked lettering very much."

Not unexpectedly, he had "always" been drawing. As if he had never reflected on such matters before, dredging up the mundane memory as from an untapped oil reserve, he measures out his thoughts: "I probably started by copying cartoons . . . things that you see in papers . . . Disney." Things on a matchbook cover, you muse aloud, facetiously, and he responds with a warm chuckle, "Draw Me? I think I did enter that, once." Then the thought blossoms, "I didn't win anything."

Our modest limner crosses the room and turns off the disco music issuing quietly from an elaborate tape deck set-up, perhaps, just perhaps, in deference to his napping cat.

Though he reluctantly concedes that he did always get A's in Anatomy and Life classes, he didn't really begin those stunning drawings of male nudes until 10 years ago. "It was just an idea I had," he explains with some slight lack of colorful detail. Then, eventually, "I printed the portfolios myself, copyrighted them, and merchandised them at \$15 for 7 or 8 drawings. Just recently I found them in a shop up here on Sunset, framed — and these were copies — selling for \$30 apiece!" And, eyes masked behind tinted shades, he runs his fingers thru his Peppard-and-salt hair disbelievingly.

He works from life, and deduces that one of the reasons the look captured on his sketchpad is essentially one of innocence, of openness, could be that "all the models I hire are unprofessionals. Professionals usually want to do it their way." How does he find these hunky young men? "Well, whether it's a checking boy in the supermarket or somebody on the street, if I'm interested in him as a model I'll ask him. I've never had anyone get belligerent about it, and a great percentage of the time they'll say 'yes'." Prodded, embarrassed, he guesstimates ". . . a good 80%."

When complimented on the great variety of types he seems to have employed — a kind of something for everybody universality — he is not certain whether this is done consciously or unconsciously, but allows that "I think it's just that in my own preference I've always enjoyed a



variety of types, and not really been interested, y'know, in just one. I think you just try to turn your eye to see the aesthetic in all types . . . the interesting things."

His most provocative pieces, interestingly enough, were those he did for the first 3 issues of *Playgirl*, closely Varga-like nudes people insisted reminded them of Mark Spitz, Johnny Carson, and Elvis Presley. On "Tonight," Carson denied having so posed. "They didn't mention the name of the artist," he notes.

Virtually all of his output of this genre that you've seen were rendered in pencil. Asked the why of this apparent preference, he again reacts as if the fact had never occurred to him. Much consideration, then, with a sigh, plumbing the reasons; "Oils or paints take a lot of time. It's a matter of the time involved. And," he finally reaches the heart of the matter, "with pencil you get more definition." He spends about 3 days on each drawing, you glean.

A full-time professional, he admits to being an admirer of Beverly Hills' artists Alex Canedo, who "also does figures," but then, predictably, acknowledges a debt to Michelangelo, "obviously." Immediately he remarks, wishing conscientiously to be fair, that "all the old masters I admire very much." So is there any particular artist he himself collects? "No." But does he at least go to galleries, to special exhibitions? "Sometimes, if there's something special. But not as a rule."





Having perused his works prior to the interview, various phrases insinuated themselves into your mind as you drive along Sunset toward Johnson's end of town, erudite phrases culled from old art classes, pretentious phrases like "the veins of Michelangelo . . . the classic proportions of Jacques Louis David . . . the incisive lines of Ingres . . . the immediacy of Brueghel." You mention these, with utmost sincerity, to the somewhat nonplussed artist. In a few moments, he shyly recovers. "Yeah," he says.







# ménage

Photography by HY CHASE























**T**here's a new disco in Atlanta. Its clientele is basically straight; but the man it's named for says, "It wouldn't bother me (if two guys danced together) . . . My attitude—well, you already know my attitude; but I don't know what the attitude would be of some lawyer who's got \$10,000 in the place—he might just turn blue or something. But management—I guess I'm management—I wouldn't throw them out or tell them to get another partner."

That man is Burt Reynolds, and the disco is Burt's Joint. It's in the center of what must be the Disneyland of baRestaurants. Burt's Place, a fantasy world in the form of a Hollywood sound-stage, with 8 areas representing sets from different films.

Reynolds wanted to use Burt's Joint as the name for the entire operation: "I thought it would be hysterical. Every time I would go on a show, they'd say, 'How's your Joint?' There's a million of them: How big is your Joint? How many people does your Joint hold? Where is your Joint? How long—It's 9 million one-liners for a guy to do."

"Quite honestly, when I first thought of it, I wasn't thinking of the *double-entendre*. I just thought, there's nothing better than to have a very chic place and call it 'the joint.' To me, that's the ultimate in class."

But officials of the elegant Omni International complex overruled him. "I wasn't just overruled," Reynolds says. "It was *apoplexy* on the part of some people. Dead faints! . . .

They just didn't want a joint in their place."

On another subject, Reynolds recalls a couple of decades ago, when he was a young actor living in West Palm Beach, Fla. One of his heroes was a local TV star known as "Sheriff Bob": "I thought, gee, if I could just get as far as Sheriff Bob, I'd be thrilled, having my own television show! They were grooming him to be the next Dick Clark, as a matter of fact; they thought he was going to be the next Dick Clark."

Today, "Sheriff Bob," or Bob Green, is better-known as "Mr. Anita Bryant," the husband-manager of the homophobic singer.

Reynolds bristles at a reference to Bryant as his "fellow Floridian." "She's an Oklahoman," he insists. "who lives in Florida . . . She's a name they constantly throw at me when I'm writing a monologue. I mean there are certain names that you want to use that are surefire. Anita Bryant's surefire now. I always used to use Broderick Crawford and Ann Blyth, but now it's Anita Bryant."

Tho thought of by many as the essence of *macho*, Reynolds hates the word: "It's a big hype . . . It's a tack I really don't like. I have to fight my way out of it."

How would he define *macho*? "I'll tell you what it *doesn't* mean. It doesn't mean intelligence, it doesn't mean vulnerability, it doesn't mean sensitivity; and those are 3 terribly important things to me. To reach the so-called 'macho fan,' it isn't

necessary to kick somebody down the stairs or rip his face off and step on his nose.

"To me," he says, "the most appealing kind of leading man has always been the one who's the most vulnerable. My favorite films are the ones Frank Capra made . . . with an almost silly kind of hope."

That's one direction he thinks movies are headed in, with *Rocky* a prime example. The other is the *Slap Shot* genre: "They're gonna take that to the furthest degree and get dirtier and filthier until they can't go any further. Then the new pornography will be to see Gary Gilmore shot."

His next film, *Semi-Tough*, may fall in both categories. He describes it as "a *menage a trois* in the lightest kind of 40's vein—Spencer Tracy (Kris Kristofferson) and Gable (Reynolds) going after Myrna Loy (Jill Clayburgh); and I hope she picks Gable."

With a football setting, it has plenty of rough language; but Reynolds says, "If you took all the 4-letter words out, I think you'd have a G picture. There isn't any violence and there isn't explicit sex."

"The problem with the book is that it was just a series of sketches—very funny sketches, but with nothing to hold them together. So we took the 3 characters out—*Son of Semi-Tough*. I think it's a funny picture."

It's directed by Michael (*The*

(continued on page 86)

" . . . I would play a gay person if it was something meaningful and interesting . . ."

# BURT REYNOLDS

By STEVE WARREN

# interview.





Smokey And The Bandit, 1977



# Mykonos

Words & Pictures By D.R. ROMAN

It is almost impossible to be lonely there . . . the cross section of international beauty comes in all sizes and shapes



## Capri of the Aegean

Come July and August the annual rite of the migration of the Athenian hustler begins, mixed with rucksacked wayfarers and Gucci-clad sophisticates

Only in the Greek Islands does one so easily give into the hedonism of brilliant blue skies and radiant sunshine . . . captivating the eye with views of stern and sullen cliffs looming over shimmering seas, the sparkle of white-washed villages tucked into verdant mountain slopes and stone-cast meadows

The enchantment of the Aegean and Ionian seas is indeed overwhelming, and of all the islands in the Cyclades, Mykonos maintains and radiates a special aura of uniqueness and charm . . . at once primitive and secretive and con-



sistently at peace with itself. This lighthearted island, a refuge from the cares and conflicts of the outside world, remains a haven for existentialists, artists, society dropouts and a smattering of European aristocrats.

With the gradual descent of Spring into Summer, the golden island joyously subsides—welcoming the new and returning guests from

adonis' and golden Aryans from the continent. All with flashing smiles and penetrating stares something for everyone.

A typical day might commence with coffee and croissants on a hotel terrace overlooking the sea, an early morning hike up to the thatched windmills stoically guarding the rocky hills overlooking the town

Minatour to disco, cruise and talk until 4 a.m. and perhaps and most likely share an assignation prior to watching the dawn break across the island of Delos.

A must is a day excursion by small boat to Delos, about five miles from Mykonos. Once considered the sacred island and the birthplace of Apollo, it remains today a haven of



the daily boats from Piraeus, the port of Athens and other points of embarkation. Hotel reservations are a necessity. The Xenia, Lito and Mykonos beach bungaloes are favorites and accommodations in private homes are a friendly and reasonable bargain.

Come July and August the annual rite of the migration of the Athenian hustler begins, mixed with rucksacked wayfarers and Gucci-clad sophisticates. It is almost impossible to be lonely there . . . the cross section of international beauty comes in all sizes and shapes . . . a veritable haven of contrasts of olive-skinned

a picnic of Feta cheese, earthy wine, olives and crusty bread casually packed with minimal bikinis . . . loaded into a small caique destined for a remote and sandy inlet on the far side of the island or anchor at Patialos, one of the nude beaches that abound on the shoreline later a nap or a stroll through the quiet maze of whitewashed cobbled streets . . . soft warm breezes filtering through radiant bowers of bougainvillea . . . browsing through tiny boutiques, a retsina at a taverna on the harbor quay. A casual dinner, a tour of the bars such as the Nine Muses, Pablos and the

shattered colonnades, crumbling statuary and foundations . . . exciting to wander and explore amid the phallic remains of Priapus and Leto to the accompaniment of the haunting strains of the Meltemi, the warm wind that prevails in the Aegean during the summer months.

The euphoria, so very special to these islands, contributes greatly to the credibility of the gods and their legends and unlike Ulysses, you may wish to remain forever captive but more than likely will return again.







**D**on Kyle is a partner in a garment industry firm, and occasionally works late at the office when duty calls. You could say he really puts his all into the job, and that kind of tireless dedication can create the need for some release from the tensions of the workaday world. That kind of a schedule doesn't leave much time for hobbies like golf and skiing, but it's tough to keep this strapping 6 ft. 190 lb. fellow down. A sandy-haired, blue-eyed, 23-year-old Aquarian, Don hails from Terre Haute, Indiana, and after a stint in the Navy decided to make California his home. So he packed up his belongings and his business acumen and here he is. Working overtime, naturally.

Photography By HY CHASE



# Overtime



























'The Destroying Angel' was prompted by his uncanny physical resemblance to Edgar Allan Poe.

He is what you might call an eclectic director of homosexual erotica.

'The Destroying Angel' was prompted by his uncanny physical resemblance to Edgar Allan Poe.

As his own little Hitchcock signature, there's a black in every film he's made.

"... very few sexual encounters do work out agreeably or are completely successful."

He wants to make 'Grand Motel' — an all-gay superstar version like its inspiration.

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His uncanny resemblance to Edgar Allan Poe inspired 'The Destroying Angel'

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As his own little Hitchcock signature, there's a black in every film he's made.

Photo by Jacqueline



**P**eter de Rome is an auteur among gay porn filmmakers. Many of the original *Erotic Films of Peter de Rome* are little sexual conundrums painstakingly crafted and originally made for the amusement of friends who urged him to have them blown up and made commercially available. He is what you might call an eclectic director of homosexual erotica.

His 30-odd-short films are in fact an amalgamation of bits and pieces of his life and the tangents he's gone off on. In one of them he has captured a vivid picture of the Garden District of New Orleans in the early '60s, which almost teems with repressed eroticism. Of these small gems, some consider *Underground* his masterpiece. The film takes off from one of those fantasies that everyone must have had sometime in New York, in which you actually consummate a sex act on a subway train.

In his cozy apartment near Sutton Place, where he's lived for 20 years, he is firmly ensconced in one of New York's poshest neighborhoods — thanks to rent control — and lives just around the corner from Greta Garbo. Garbo even makes a brief appearance in *Adam & Yves*, when Adam, in a mutual sharing of personal experiences, tells Yves, a new French playmate he's found in Paris, about how he once saw Greta Garbo in the street. By incorporating things from his own life in this way, Peter de Rome adds a sense of self to his films that's unique. *Adam & Yves* is full of affectionate homages to Bertolucci (*Last Tango in Paris*), W. H. Auden ("A Day for a Lay") and Cocteau (*Blood of a Poet*).

In his film *The Destroying Angel*, he plumbed the complex duplicities of a sexual Doppelganger, a lapsed priest who is haunted by his debauched alter ego in an almost reversed Dorian Gray.

Sitting with him in his quaint (unheated) pad, he is a short man with large, vigilant eyes and a high forehead. He's only a year or so older than Paul Newman or Marlon Brando, he tells me. Peter de Rome (his real name) was born in the South of France (Juan-les-Pins) and raised in the South of England (Kent). He worked in the movies in England and Europe for 10 years as a film publicist — with J. Arthur Rank, Alexander Korda, David O. Selznick — and came to the U.S. to work for Selznick, "but he died."

He spent 2 years in the South working in the Civil Rights movement, and was once arrested with an actress friend — Madeleine Sherwood — at a demonstration in Alabama. Subsequently he worked with the Free Southern Theatre in New Orleans — a city he came to love and where he experienced many bizarre sexual encounters straight out of Tennessee Williams.

He started making sex pics in '65 when he bought his first 8mm camera. At first "I would shoot myself with a hard on in front of a mirror, and would bury the shot in the middle of otherwise innocent footage and then wait breathlessly to see if Kodak would send it back. They usually did." Then he got bolder and bolder, ending up sending 50-foot sex scenes thru at a time. He has made about 30 private films in this way.

He showed just one — *Hot Pants* — at the Wet Dream Film Festival in Amsterdam in '71, and won 1st prize. Producer Jack Deveau saw his films and decided to blow 8 of them up to 16mm for commercial release as *The Erotic Films of Peter de Rome*.

**In Touch:** Do you think there is any difference between pornography and eroticism?

**PdR:** Yes, I most certainly do. And, in fact, I've got a few aphorisms on that subject. It's very important to me, and I'd try to sum it up in this way: Pornography is to eroticism as vulgarity is to humor. And then to back that up I have three more: Eroticism is to arousal as pornography is to performance. Arousal is to promise as performance is to completion. Promise is to infinity as completion is to limitation. I did a lot of thinking about that (laughs), but it does sum up what I think is the difference.

**IT:** How do you conceive of your highly plotted and complex plots?

**PdR:** They come to me in various inexplicable ways. I really can't tell you how I conceive of them. It might be a picture (such as the one that demonstrated my uncanny physical resemblance to Edgar Allan Poe, and which prompted *The Destroying Angel*), or a phrase from a tune, a tiny incident . . . for instance, I can tell you about one idea, the origin of it. I've longed for many years to do a little film called *I Love a Parade*. And it's about a guy who goes out on parade days and cruises some of the onlookers, feeling their bums and groping them and getting close like a



Photo courtesy Hand In Hand Films



lot of people do in parades and gradually getting so carried away that he actually goes down on one of the onlookers while they're all there watching the parade go by. And that actually did take place with a friend of mine years and years ago on Coronation Day in England. There was this mass of people outside

Buckingham Palace all waving like mad at the royal family and I looked around to say something to my friend and there he was down on his knees blowing a soldier in the crowd. And I'd just love to make a little movie based on that idea — maybe this year, as it's the Silver Jubilee!



Jack Deveau (standing) on location with de Rome in France



Adam & Yves



Adam & Yves

**IT:** You are one of the only persons who has explored black eroticism in sex films. How did you come about this?

**PdR:** Mainly because I happen to like black people very much. I have a great affinity with and for black people and I try to get somebody black or several black people into every film I make. In fact, it's become a sort of signature with me, my little personal Hitchcock signature, so that if you look very closely you'll see

Hand In Hand Films





Bill Eld in *Destroying Angel*

somebody black in every film I've made, even if it's only a picture of somebody black. And in *Adam & Yves* in particular, I wanted to do an important scene with black people and I conceived of that black orgy. I like working with black people and I find them extremely erotic.

IT: Do you still yearn to wade into the murky waters of legitimate film?

PdR: Well, that's a very thorny question. What I would like very much is if some wealthy patron came along

and I told them an idea I had and they said here, here's the money, we don't care if it's not commercial, go ahead and do it. I'd love that. I suppose it's just castles in the air. But who knows? If like Cocteau, I could find a Vicomtesse de Noailles, who put up the money for *Blood of a Poet*, I'd like that to happen. But I just don't think anyone's ever going to ask me, that's all. Although I do have some great ideas!

IT: What constitutes to you the ideal homoerotic film?

PdR: Well, I must say the field is wide open. I think so far to me the model erotic film is *Un Chant D'Amour*, the Jean Genet thing. Even though that was made over 20 years ago, to me it still has much more going for it than much that has taken place since. I think that we've barely scratched the surface of pornography in film making, and that it has become a sort of mandatory thing in sex films to show a positive view of sex and all of sex is supposed to be the ultimate, the pinnacle of excitement and life simply isn't like that. It seems to me that sometime we've got to get honest about sex and admit to ourselves that very few sexual encounters do work out agreeably or are completely successful. And that's one of the reasons that I did the first scene in *Destroying Angel* as a 'down'; it was meant to be an unsuccessful sex trip.

And apparently it was as it turned a lot of people off, and they don't want to be reminded. But why not for God's sake? I think we can learn from our failures as from our successes. I have a very simple if not simplistic attitude toward sex films, and that is that sex is just as much a part of life as living - eating - breathing - sleeping. It's just another function of life and I don't see why it can't be depicted dramatically just as those other functions are and as honestly, too. And I think we have to show every aspect of sex in films before we can really say we are making sex films. At the moment it seems that we are titillating a certain section, a certain segment of the audience who are mostly repeaters, who go back again and again mostly to cruise the theatre, and that's okay, but that's not really why I am interested in sex films, and they're not really the people I'm making my sex films for. And even though I agree with a lot of what J. Brian said in his article in *IN TOUCH*, I cannot myself approach sex films in the same way he does.

IT: What are your plans for a gay *Grand Hotel* called *Grand Motel*?

PdR: Well, I hope very much I can do it if we find the financing. I want it to be an all-gay superstar version like the original, and it does seem to work terribly well as a gay story — with Garbo and Crawford being played by two of our leading gay porno men!



# michael ONTKEAN



Ontkean (center) in TV's "The Rookies"

By JEFF WATKINS

**R**ugged legs and a set of solid lungs under his well-distributed ribs aren't the only things that make Michael Ontkean hard to catch. If the new wave of film represents freedom for its maker, Ontkean represents the new wave of film.

He refuses to play celebrity games, but quietly marches to his own music. Not even Universal's rigid studio system could chain him down during his latest performance for them with Paul Newman in *Slapshot*, George (Sting) Roy (*Butch Cassidy*) Hill, director.

Heady company for a former "Rookie." Ontkean's fame began as he fired the libidos of America's teen tube audience during that short-lived but popular series. Some believe, clearly those in high places

too, that Ontkean made the show. His face shot across teen rags nationwide, his private life withstood close scrutiny alongside Donny Osmond, and for a brief fling he out-throbbled David Cassidy.

Teeny paparazzi had a hard run for it; Mike carefully covered his tracks, leaving them nothing but imagination to illuminate his dusky sexy shadow.

At the peak of the show's success, he left it. Maybe police drag didn't turn him on. More likely he resented pressure to portray a cardboard bigot; he cited "artistic differences" as his reason for leaving. Ed Davis, as usual, had no idea what he was losing. Canada swallowed up her native son, and didn't let him out on loan until *Slapshot*. Who is this guy who can turn his back on success and get

asked back for more?

Good question . . . because he hasn't made it easy for anyone.

Vancouver sprouted him. Leonard and Muriel Cooper Ontkean walked the boards in Canada, and in grand old vaudeville tradition stuck little Mikey into the act at 5 tender years. That first dowsing shot greasepaint into his veins permanently, and kept him in drama at intervals through school. The University of New Hampshire watched him major in theatre arts. Heady success there sent him packing for Hollywood with \$50 in his pocket, a plan in his head, and a smile over his limpid dark features.

Life in the Big Orange quickly wiped that grin away. Hopes for a role in the film version of *Fiddler on the Roof* sank into the reality of the lead in a Bert I. Gordon spooker eventually titled *Necromancy*. Produced by today's king of the "B" picture, it prophetically teamed him up with legendary Orson Welles, and child prodigy Pamela Franklin. Keep your eyes open; they say like attracts like. He hit TV: "The Partridge Family" and a stint with Rodgers and Hammerstein protégée Shirley Jones; on to paraplegic Perry Mason, Raymond Burr in "Ironside." A high blood pressure mark had to be co-starring with Burt Reynolds in "Dan August"; now, that is a show worth scanning reruns for.

Hollywood's big question remains: Mike, what could possibly be more attractive than the raving love of a million fans across the world? How about poetry. Ontkean boasts two published tomes to his name and, like their creator, elude close inspection.

Ontkean must mix a powerful brew of charisma and mystery to get his way with a hard-nosed studio like Universal after his unexpected vacation. But almost metaphysical forces hover around *Slapshot* and his role in it. Either writer Nancy Dowd had inside info about who would play her juvenile lead, or for once the stars aligned properly.

Because the Canadian poet is also a former hockey jock. Easy to believe while you enjoy his climactic strip in *Slapshot*'s last minutes. His superb build is the result of a distinguished if characteristically personal career on the ice. High school drop-outs don't generally cut much ice with respectable schools, particularly if they quit because of "boredom." He



Slap Shot, with Paul Newman, 1977



had no less than 14 athletic scholarships to yawn over after his dramatic move. Choosing New Hampshire, he melted ice across the nation just as he would soon melt hearts. Like Newman's team in the film, he dangled his toe into the bloody waters of semi-pro hockey. Then **SMASH!!** his best friend actually died in the arena, crumpling his skull against a goalpost. Hockey suddenly lost its appeal.

*Slapshot* hovers around Ontkian's life with uncanny fidelity. He performs with the intensity of a man who churns his role from the gut. But more than his performance is on the line as George Roy Hill and Nancy Dowd insinuate their veiled (and soon to be unveiled) message. His screen character is a talented, fiercely competitive loner who refuses to indulge in his team's degraded clowning. On-screen he calls his superior, off-screen he calls his shots and takes off for Canada to write poetry or to Italy for sculpture courses with renowned artist, Jacques Lipchitz. His cinematic statement is a strip. The difference between stripping and art is that one bares the body and the other bares the soul.

*Slapshot* could almost be a sexless rehearsal for *The Front Runner*. Paul Newman, who owns the property, lies in bed with an admitted lesbian and contemplates gay sex. Side by side in the penalty box, he and Ontkian might easily resemble athlete lovers. They do portray coach and the athlete he's training. Imagine Ontkian's intensity and quiet dignity as Billy Sive.

Many people, from desperate teens to golden-agers, are speculating about Ontkian ... because that's all they can do. He looks to be a male Garbo, lithely sexual with a huge faithful following who have to settle for second-hand and rumor.

Or they can watch his films. The man bares everything, and not just as a hockey player stripping in public to show how ridiculous his game has become.

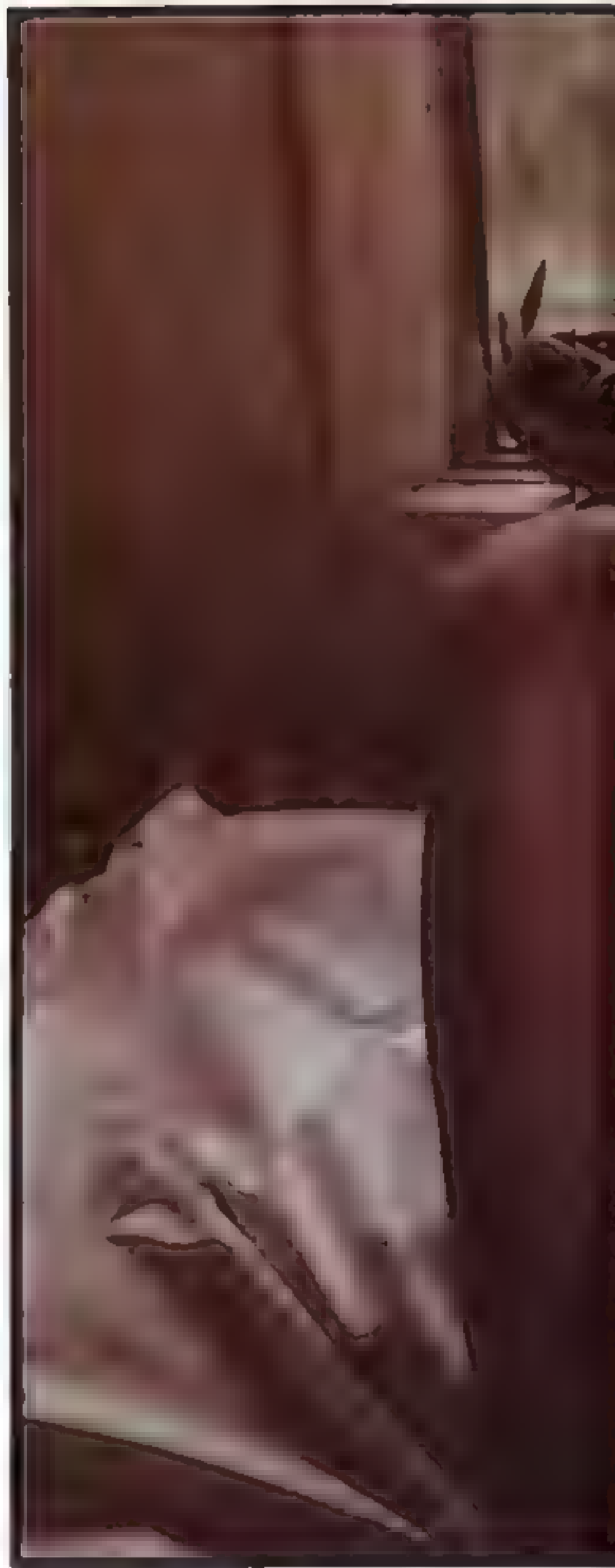
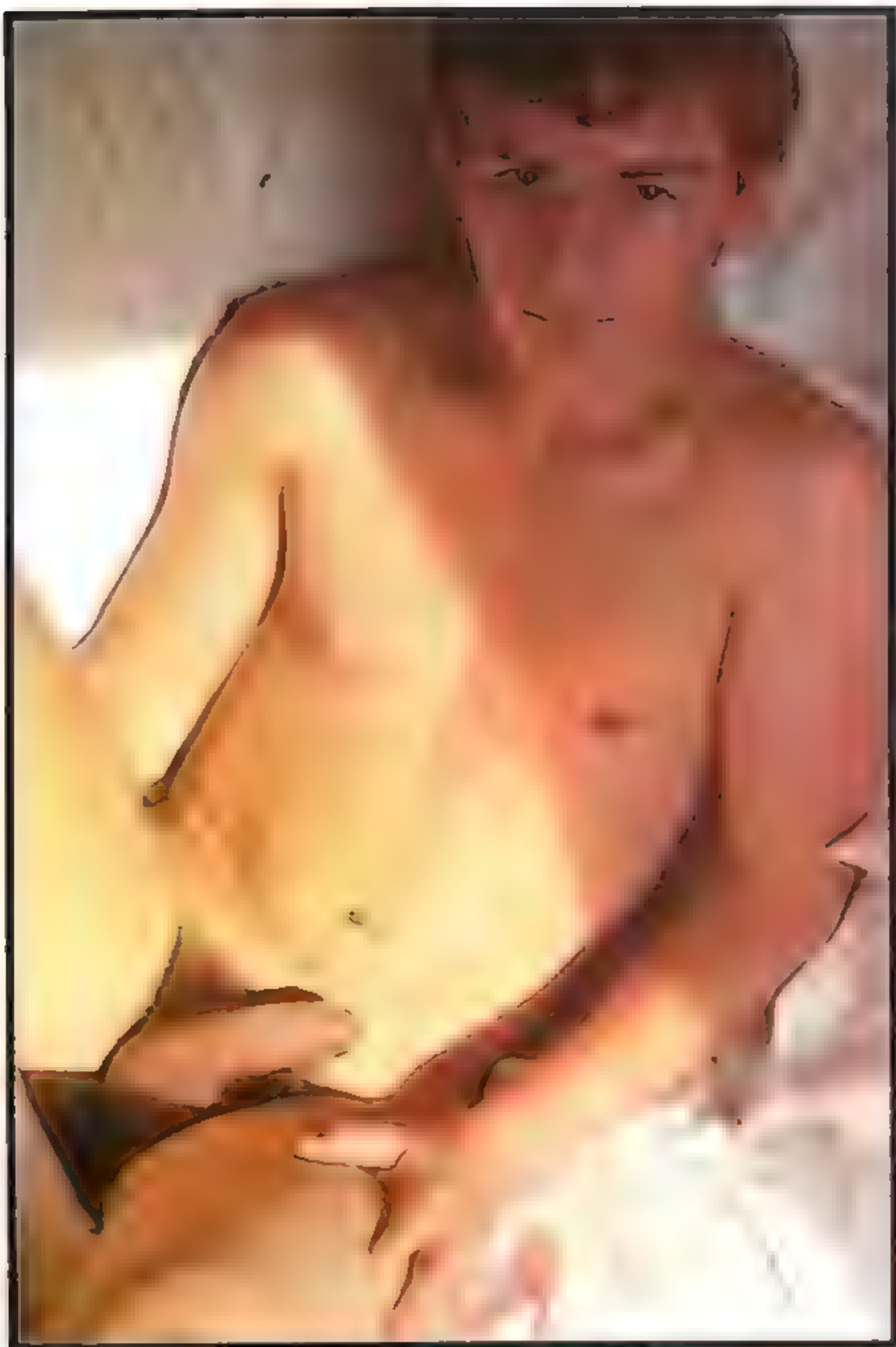
He lights up the cliché ideal of jock masculinity with introverted dignity. He is disturbingly, compellingly attractive because he fills his characters with emotional meat. Anyone with the will and the heart can touch Michael Ontkian with their mind.

But no-one except him knows what he's going to do next.



Slap Shot





Joe





Words & Pictures by BOB HEART

**J**oe Kramer. Always on the move. Born and raised in the tall cornfields of Iowa. This lithe 19-year-old Virgo recalls his growing up in the midwest. "My father was in construction, so naturally that's where I ended up: sweat and a lot of hard work. There was nothing to hold me there. . . I wanted to see the world." His thumb went out and he's been traveling ever since. The road's taught him lots of lessons and held many rewards. "I dream of owning a customized Chevy van with everything in it," he smiles. And then the fun will just have begun.















# JOHN

By PETER BURTON

# CURRY

The foremost Nijinsky on skates was a virtual unknown less than two years ago but now he's a rage on ice.

As the first English skater to scoop the European Men's Figure Skating Championship, an Olympic gold medal, and the World Championship, John Curry is a phenomenon about whom everyone is aware.

Tickets for his recently finished "John Curry's Theatre of Skating" season in London were harder to come by than gold bricks. Already "John Curry's Theatre of Skating II" is being readied for summer at the London Palladium (opening July 5). Yet, less than two years ago few people would have been able to say who this Nijinsky on skates was.

Curry, now 26, has nurtured an ideal of what skating should be for the last 19 years — ever since, as a child, he saw a production of "Aladdin on Ice" on TV. Birmingham-born Curry had originally wanted to be a ballet dancer, but his father didn't like the idea, feeling that it wasn't a manly enough profession. Yet his ideal has been to incorporate into ice skating the ballet form and his "Theatre of Dance" utilized a host of names and styles from the ballet world.

But he isn't consciously trying to make skating into an art-form: "Actually, I don't like using the word 'art,'" he says. "When people say to me 'Are you trying to make skating an art?' I couldn't in all honesty say 'Yes'. What I want to do is try to present skating as well as it can be presented, so that the whole form can be improved on, developed and explored. I'm surprised when people say that until they saw me they'd never thought skating could be artistic — a dance form. I've never thought of it any other way."

Because of peculiar attitudes the British have towards sports, he moved from England to the U.S.: "I used to get up at 5 every morning, skate from 6 until 12 and then go to work from 1 until 5:30 — and sometimes in the evenings too. I was always broke and always tired. There were few people who understood why I was doing it. Everybody would think 'What a bore: he never does



Photo by Kenn Duncan

anything — has to go off and do his ice-skating," he says. "The British concept is that sport is something you do in addition to your 'real' work. Consequently there is no proper provision made for serious sportsmen at all."

At his training center in Denver,

under the patronage of an American millionaire, he was able to train for 7 hours a day, 7 days a week. In these more satisfactory circumstances, Curry was able to run his life on an almost normal cycle: "I don't lead a monastic life by any means," he says with a grin. "In New York, where I live most of the time, I do have to get up early to skate, but it's hard to get to bed early in New York because there's so much to do. Sometimes I go out dancing or partying."

An intensely private person, who doesn't wish to discuss his personal life, Curry is distrustful of the press — especially after the pick-up on a remark he made before the Olympic competition to the effect that he hoped the judges would say that he skated like a gay (he had been criticized in the past for a lack of virility in style). "I can understand that when one comes into the public eye people want to know about your private life," he explains. "But I don't really feel it's anybody's business. I'm very pleased if people want to know about my skating, and it's not a trial to have to talk about that."





## sydney

Most people know of Sydney's controversial and breathtaking Opera House, but how many know of what goes on in the vast, multimillion-dollar complex? Besides operas, there's a drama theatre, where the Old Tote Theatre Co. presents productions thru the year; screenings of old and new films; a music room where you can hear anything from rock to Elizabethan Madrigals and lots more.

But it's the operas staged by the Australian Opera Co., which I'd like to tell you about. If you live in the northern hemisphere then you'll know that, compared to us, the seasons are reversed. When it's winter here, it's summer up north. The Australian Opera's summer season was a great success and June 4 the winter season began with a gala performance of "Lucrezia Borgia" starring our own Joan Sutherland.

The season runs 'til Oct. 14, and if you'll be in Australia between now and then, take in an opera. There'll be 85 performances during the 18-week season, including four major new productions — Donizetti's "Lucrezia Borgia," Auber's "Fra Diavolo," Verdi's "Macbeth," and Wagner's "The Flying Dutchman."

If you're coming, contact David Colville at Australian Opera (P.O. Box J194, Brickfield Hill NSW 2000) and he'll arrange tickets.

Two of the principals who'll perform are Lyndon Terracini and Ron Stevens. Terracini is a baritone who's had a swift rise to prominence. Just 25, he joined the New Opera South Australia in '74, and played many roles including Malaestra, and Vacek in Janacek's "The Excursions of Mr. Bruncvik."

He also appeared for the Australian Broadcasting Commission, performing in the Australian premiere of Williamson's Third Symphony and many other concerts and broadcasts. He joined the

Australian Opera two years ago, debuting in "A Masked Ball" as Silvano and Sid in "Albert Herring" and Guglielmo in "Cosi fan Tutte."

Following his great success at the Adelaide Festival this year in Henze's "El Cimarron," he's been invited to Montepulciano in Italy to perform the title role in Paisiello's "Don Quixote" in a new realization by Henze and Peter Maxwell Davies. He leaves in July and will return in September to resume his contract as a principal artist of The Australian Opera.

Stevens' interest in singing began when he was 19 and stationed in Germany with the U.S. Air Force. He was in a group of Americans forming an ensemble company to perform light opera. After leaving the service, he returned to his home in L.A., where he worked days, studied at USC nites, and studied singing in his spare time.

He made his pro singing debut at 22 in the role of Turiddu in "Cavalleria Rusticana" for the Citrus Opera Company of Calif. For the next 5 years he split his time between the nitery circuit of Reno and Lake Tahoe and Calif. opera and light opera companies. He moved to Sydney in '71.

During the next 5 years he appeared in 35 operas, musicals and oratorios. Since joining the Australian Opera in '73 for the 1st season of the Sydney Opera House, he's concentrated on opera but has continued to sing popular songs on TV, stage and radio. During the '77 Australian Opera Winter Season, he'll play Gennaro in "Lucrezia Borgia," and Don Jose in "Carmen," before leaving for Canada and the Vancouver Opera Association's "Le Roi de Lahore."

—Martin Smith



Lyndon Terracini

(continued on page 74 )



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# REVIEWS



## Kepler's Comments

A friend of mine greets each new crisis in the gay movement with the hysteria of Chicken Little. Every other day he's sure the sky is falling. Many gays have a gut fear that people really hate us; that, despite our progress, the public will soon rise up and destroy us.

They see each Anita as the beginning of our end. Does almost every office seeker in some cities solicit our support? The fearful will point to areas where even most liberals remain homophobic. Have gays been invited back to the White House? But what about those in the boonies who hate us and Carter both? If law reform's advanced in a few more places, hasn't it also been reversed in others?

Progress generally moves with a sort of shuffle: two gains here, a setback there. But pessimists can always point to losses and lurking dangers — and we'd be fools to ignore them.

The strident attack by Miami's Citric Acid Queen gave many of us the jitters — tho a decade ago her view was so common it would barely have made local headlines. She raises the specter of legal-legislative reverses not just in Dade Co., but she raises the specter of recently liberal churches reverting to faggot-burning. She raises the specter of people taking extreme measures to protect their children from us.

These fears are vastly overblown, even if they aren't groundless.

It's pointless to try guessing when a particular opponent will win a big round — or even retire from the fray. Anita can afford to quit this fight. We can't.

But whether we will have won or lost this Miami round (the vote occurs before this column is out) counts less than whether we let despair or apathy immobilize us. We must continue to fight for our rights even if we aren't by nature fighters. We must never give in to "all is lost" hysteria. We must urge more gays and non-gays to meaningful commitments to freedom and rights. We must remember that no matter how far our progress goes, we'll always be plagued by Anita Bryants, Don Slaters and Ed Davises. And it'll always remain a possibility that the sky really may fall.

It may happen unless more gays accept responsibility for our individual and collective fate. We must carry our own ball while we learn to work with allies. Above all we must not let our fears about "What Anita might think" prompt us to put down those classes of gays seen by some as "bad for our image."

Since civil rights depends on a healthy and fairly stable society, we must also make a commitment to larger social concerns: lest international, economic or ecological crises swamp our fragile movement.

That particularly can be complex and difficult. Gay society is, above all else, diverse, and we have sharply differing ideas about what the main problems are and what to do about them. I think our diversity is a blessing — but it's up to us to find ways of using it to build and insure an open and creative future. If we don't, who'll do it for us?

—Jim Kepler



(continued from page 13)

## MUSIC

flight to the nearest disco will save  
mind and muscle from terminal  
atrophy.

"I Am The Sky" takes its lyrics from Paramahansa Yogananda in an exquisite musical setting by Wright, but that tone is sustained thruout this 1-note trip the album becomes

The album cover portrait of Billy Dee Williams may prove an inspiration, but Dick Hyman's arrangement and performance of Joplin numbers for the soundtrack of **Scott Joplin** (MCA) fails to evoke the era of potted palms, piano scarves and beaded curtains which the tributes to the man and music on Angel Records conjure.

Now that Funkadelic has found a larger appreciative audience at last (on 2 separate labels) they appear to be cashing in without regard for the investment of outrageous originality which marked their earlier albums. **Hardcore Jollies** (Warners) stars a solid soul entry in "You Scared the Lovin' Outta Me" but the balance of this funky serving is thinned out and somewhat stale.

—Damon West

## BOOKS

**F**ive years ago publishers bitched: gay books don't sell. Now they're coming out in a tide. Especially biographies, which less often hide their subjects' gayness.

**REMEMBERED LAUGHTER,** *The Life of Noel Coward*, by Cole Leslie (Knopf, \$12.95, 481 pgs.) is aptly titled. The actor / singer / writer's wit echoes through his longtime intimate's ebullient memoir. Early sections owe much to "Mum's" suitcase full of letters, clippings and notes. For Coward's later adventures in the theatre and high society, Leslie used his own recollections and Noel's 2 autobiographies.

Coward was never in the closet, and Leslie never exactly puts him there, but the subject is treated only implicitly, and the 1953-55 English witchhunt of gays which shot down several Coward friends, not at all.

Sheridan Morley's **MARLENE DIETRICH** (McGraw-Hill, \$6.95.

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128 pgs.) traces the mannishly-dressed love goddess from her unsurpassed 1930 *Blue Angel*. too



MARLENE  
DIETRICH  
BY SHERIDAN MORLEY

Grandmarlene's still undiminished glow on the stage. The compact text avoids moviemagazine gush and gives well-organized details for film buffs. Gay themes just hinted at . . .

The big gay history is A.L. Rowse's *HOMOSEXUALS IN HISTORY. Ambivalence in Society, Literature and the Arts* (Macmillan, \$12.95, 346 pgs.). The Oxford Don spent several previous books nailing the closet door tightly around Shakespeare. This is a highly readable, often superficial account of famous homosexual males since 1500. Short on historic analysis, and marred by occasional well-bred snickers, but Rowse has many sparkling beads strung here.

Allen Ginsberg's *JOURNALS EARLY FIFTIES EARLY SIXTIES*, edited by Gordon Ball (Grove Press, 292 pgs.), follows the inchoate and electric poet from his days as a fan running after Wm. Carlos Williams in Patterson, N.J., until as the chief survivor of the Beat Generation, he blared his homosexuality without yet sensing non-sexual levels of gayness.

Poems in the rough, accounts of his heteroizing friends, of dope and busts, of flash attractions to young men . . . Ginsberg's effect on gay liberation was protean, and for readers who like rough edges the growth of the Ginsberg persona is exciting to follow.

(continued on page 92)

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# Letters

## Al Parker's Lenser

Of course Al Parker is beautiful; however the photographer is also a genius. The photos are a true work of art, yet no mention or credit is given to the photographer. Who is it; I would like to see more of his work.

Ray Vas  
Santa Monica, Ca.



The photos are beautiful, that's why we ran them. But the photographer wishes to remain anonymous, and we respect his decision.

## Rinder's Great Work

I have just finished issue 29 of your magazine, and I would like to share with you one of my reactions. Your spread on Walt Rinder is one of the nicest selections that I've seen in *IN TOUCH*. I'm just delighted to see the poetic and aesthetic emphasis of the male nude. There's such a great need in our society to view the male from Rinder's vision. I feel your continuation of this type of viewpoint will increase subscriptions. I would like to see more of this orientation in *IN TOUCH* and other magazines on the market. As a matter of fact, I'm giving a 2-year subscription.

David A. Stefan  
Goleta, Ca.

Congratulations to whomever ran the article on Walt Rinder. Finally *IN TOUCH* has proven that you don't have to have a long hard cock to sell a gay mag. And how refreshing to find someone who places love and respect for each other (gay or straight) over anything else.

Robert P. Jones  
Santa Barbara, Ca.

## Thanks For Rechy

Rechy is in top form if that excerpt from *The Sexual Outlaw* is representative of the entire book. Let's hear (or read) more from that man.

John Davidson  
Tampa, Fla.

Since reading the selection from *The Sexual Outlaw* in *IN TOUCH* I've purchased the book and stayed up most of the night to finish it. Everyone of us should get a copy, read it twice and then give it to a straight friend.

R.D.  
New York

Thank for running the excerpt from Rechy's new book — it's the highlight in the current issue of *IN TOUCH*. Let me add that, in some ways, Rechy's little intro was almost as interesting as the section from *Sexual Outlaw*. I'd like to know much more about him. Is this book really autobiographical? What's he been doing between *NUMBERS* and now?

J. Agnini  
New York

Just picked up the latest issue of *IN TOUCH* this afternoon and while I'm thinking about it, I wanted to congratulate you on the excitement and quality of your magazine. I especially enjoyed the excerpt from *Sexual Outlaw* by Rechy. The man can think as well as write. Tonite I'm going to buy the book. Next issue I'd love to read an interview with him.

A New Jersey reader

Rechy was interviewed extensively (with pics) in the March '74 issue of *IN TOUCH*, but unfortunately those issues are sold out.

(continued on page 79)



## "MYSTERIES"

space between us as I circled his waist, letting my hands run over the two globes of his ass.

It seemed, holding him that way, that our bodies were the finest instruments, and our music would untune the sky. I kissed him and felt his tongue dart into my mouth. I could taste the love and loss and loneliness and I had no choice but to pour the same into my kiss. He murmured in Spanish when he tasted me, then I led him quietly to the bed. He lay back so our bodies meshed, then he twined his arms around my neck and closed his eyes.

I didn't remember much after that. Time stopped and the room began to tilt and after a while Sammy, thrashing and twisting, began to blur and I had the impression we were both dissolving into sound, or sweat, and we would have to finish soon or go crazy . . . and then I was pushing downward to the dense center of his body where his sex rose tall and tight . . . and I sensed an abyss opening beneath me and I was sliding and tumbling into the blackness . . . a blackness that we shared and from which we might . . . never . . . emerge . . .

**Y**ou're okay."

He had just come in from the bathroom. I was still in bed. "You're okay too. Lie down."

But he sat on the edge of the bed and gazed down at me. "Cord," he said. "Cord what?"

"McGreevy. Cord McGreevy."

He told me his last name was Aponte, making me pronounce it until I got it right. He had come to New York when he was nine. His dream was to go back to Puerto Rico to live. He had some crazy ideas—making Taino Indian souvenirs for tourists, raising green turtles commercially, introducing jai alai in the big hotels. I wondered if he had the price of airfare to San Juan.

While I told him about myself, his gaze wandered, fixing at last on a damp patch on the ceiling. "You oughta get that fixed."

"Yeah," I replied. "The whole place needs fixing. Painting too."

I sensed his restlessness. He was about to leave. Would he ask for money?

"You oughta paint it something crazy," he laughed. "Orange or purple."

Something nudged at my memory.

"Purple? Who ever heard of a bedroom painted purple?"

"I seen one. Old guy I used to know."

I sat up. Sammy's eyes widened with fear—or was that my imagination? Then he slid off the bed and into his clothes. I watched, refusing to think. At the front door I kissed him, but he didn't respond. When I asked him if we might meet again, he said he'd see me around. I knew where that "around" was. Nowhere. But before I could say so, he was gone.

I don't know how long I sat, trying to keep my mind from turning handsprings, which is pretty hard to do if you have a weakness for mysteries. At last a spasm went through me and I stood up, found a jacket, and headed out the door. It was nine o'clock and it hadn't occurred to me to be hungry.

I knew there'd be a night watchman for the building materials. This one was sitting on a concrete block behind the big sign. He was old, with a pickled, grainy look. I saw the flash of a pint going in his pocket as I approached.

The trick to interrogating is to pretend you know more than you do. I learned that not from a spy novel but from my home-room teacher, who used to trap us into admitting we'd been smoking dope in the boy's room.

"Too bad about the trouble next door." I nodded toward the Broadbent house, a ghostly white against the night sky.

He looked at me suspiciously, then shrugged. "Fuckin' queer."

I swallowed hard. "Serves him right. Boyfriends comin' every night."

Old Pickleface looked at me, then nodded. "I seen 'em."

"That's what the police said. You were very helpful." His wary look returned, and I went on. "I live across from 17th Precinct. Got friends there. Said you didn't miss a thing." He grinned at that and I made a quick mental calculation. Broadbent had been dead three days when his body was discovered. "Last Friday," I remarked casually, "cops said you saw that one too. Care for a cigarette?"

He put it carefully in his lipless mouth then waited for a light. "Too bad you didn't get a good look at his face."

He yanked out the cigarette. "Who said that? I seen him good! He was a Spanish guy!"

I tried to stop the hammering in my chest, without success. Then I turned, pretending to go. "That's right—I remember. Puerto Rican."

"A queer," he spat out the words, "wearing an earring like a goddam woman."

I turned on the bedside lamp. Two a.m. and sleep nowhere near. My mind had been producing a series of ugly images ever since I got home.

*Tips.* Half the crimes on the blotter are solved by tips, usually anonymous, from cabbies, or old ladies, or even nosy teachers, none of whom want to get involved. I had a sudden picture of Sammy in the interrogation room with Lt. Flynn who, unlike his namesake, would be tattooed and beefy. How long would it take to get some kind of story out of Sammy? A story false or true? Not long.

I rolled over. *Careful, careful . . .* Sweet kids with velvety eyes didn't kill their johns. It doesn't pay. Then I recalled my last sight of Sammy, on this bed, his eyes widening with fear while he looked at me. There was a message in those painted eyes. But did I know what it was?

I'm not sure what time I got to sleep. It wasn't much of a rest. In the morning I felt like I'd been wrestling with Arnie Schwarzenegger for hours. But the sleep settled one thing. It made clear what I had to do before contacting Mrs. Flynn's favorite son.

He wasn't there that evening, or the next, or the next. The *cing-a-sept* crowd was going strong, but since tonight was Friday, the sex-hunters were pouring off the 59th St. Bridge in their big cars. The Long Island crowd, hot for some action before the weekend with their wives and kiddies. I could see the cruelty this double life had etched on some faces—furtive eyes, parched lips, brittle smiles. At least I had been spared that.

I saw him south of his turf, around 50th. He was standing next to a flower stall eyeing the blooms in a melancholy way. He saw me almost at once, sensed that he was being observed. His face lit up, then closed down, cat-like.

"Wanta walk?" I gestured down the block. He hesitated, then fell into step. "How you been, Sammy?"

"Not bad."

"I really enjoyed it the other day."

"Yeah, well . . . me too."

His face was still closed, his eyelids lowered. He seemed half asleep. Then suddenly I recalled how it had been in bed—could it have been just four days ago? At the same time I knew that talking wouldn't tell me what I wanted to know. We might have talked for weeks and wound up knowing less than before.

"I want you to come home with

(continued on page 75)



isn't? . . . We had dinner twice or three times a month . . . Yes, Miss Hepburn was there, too. And Betty Bacall was there with Bogart."

Johnson is proud of his dramatic performance in *The Caine Mutiny* and lists it with *23 Paces to Baker Street*, *Battleground*, *The End of the Affair* and *The Last Time I Saw Paris* as his favorite roles. But basically he prefers "comedy — I like to make people laugh" and love stories. "I like the musicals," he says, too. "They're fun. I like to sing and dance."

One musical he didn't enjoy was *Brigadoon*, which he calls his worst moviemaking experience. "It was just a pain in the ass," he says. "That was the beginning of the changeover to CinemaScope, so we had to shoot every goddam scene twice. So you work so hard, and (Vincente) Minnelli is not the easiest director to work for — very meticulous. So whenever we got a good take — for the wide screen, they'd have to take the big camera off and load on the

CinemaScope; that's another half-hour. So it went on and on.

"It was my last picture at Metro and I was glad it was all over. I walked out of there without saying good-bye to anybody."

Johnson did a few songs in another picture, a couple of years later, called *Kelly and Me*. "Nobody saw that!" he says, surprised when I bring it up (That's another of his techniques, reacting to any title an interviewer throws out as if no one's mentioned it in at least 50 years.) "I loved playing a broken-down vaudevillian with that dog. I had to rehearse with those friggin' dogs for about six weeks.

"There were four of them, you know; but it was made to look like one. Like there were a lot of Lassies. I shouldn't be giving all these wonderful secrets away, should I?"

You'll see Johnson on TV occasionally, but he complains that the work is too hard. "Eight in the morning to eight at night — I'm too old for that." He spends most of his time playing dinner theaters, in a reper-

toire that includes "Boeing Boeing," "There's a Girl in My Soup," "The Music Man," "Bye Bye, Birdie," "Send Me No Flowers" and "I Do, I Do!"

Home, he says, is "TWA . . . I have a lovely penthouse in New York; I'm never there. I have a cook housekeeper sitting there for a thousand dollars a month, making chili for my cats."

Johnson's old fans still flock to see him wherever he plays; and some of them aren't so old. When Atlanta's Midnight Sun Dinner Theatre ran a "Van Johnson Scrapbook Contest" recently, the winner was a 31-year-old housewife from a nearby town who produced nine books full of the star's photos!

Robert Redford, eat your heart out.

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Chuck Brown

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# london

**T**he home-grown British Musical is a curious attempt to ape that most American of theatrical forms: it rarely succeeds — tho British writers, composers and producers constantly gamble lots of coin (and, for that matter, talent) in shows which are often white elephants from the word "go."

Lionel Bart succeeded with "Oliver!" — but that was his only worldwide success. He's since been down (but not out) and has just sprung back from bankruptcy with — so we're told — a desk full of new songs and 5 musical shows including, improbably, the life of Golda Meir.

Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber did it with "Jesus Christ Superstar" — but bombed dramatically with the short-lived "Jeeves" a couple of seasons back. Of course, they're now riding the crest of the wave with "Evita" — shortly destined for the stage. But even the most loyal Britisher can hardly think of more than a handful of successful English musicals. Usually we're treated to tepid scores, lame music, insipid choreography and collections of performances which rarely rise above the standard TV variety. "Fire Angel" (Her Majesty's Theatre, Haymarket) is no exception to the rule.

Based (very loosely) on "The Merchant of Venice," it has cost a small fortune to stage. It's been dogged by disaster on the road and long rumored that it wouldn't make it to London at all. The British press almost totally panned it. And no wonder. The show is incredibly unwieldy — with a cumbersome set, appalling sound, a dreary cast, and forgettable music. Matters aren't helped by the fact that the show's set in New York — so besides having to rise above weak material, the all-British cast also tries N.Y. accents.

It simply doesn't work — tho Gaye Brown, who plays a kind of compere, does have a spark of something — trying hard to belt across a song or inject some guts into the mess. Gaye, incidentally, often appears late nites in some of the town's gay clubs like Country Cousin (533 Kings Road) which has a late supper license.

One of the major topics here is the July 4th trial of *Gay News* ("the world's largest circulation newspaper for homosexuals"). The paper is being prosecuted by clean-up-Britain campaigner Mary Whitehouse, and the criminal charge is blasphemous libel (a poem published a year ago by distinguished poet James Kirkup, which she claims is blasphemous). The case may cost the paper \$40,000. Playwright and barrister John Mortimer will defend.

The last successful prosecution for blasphemous libel took place over 50 years ago, and this antiquated charge has long been up for removal from the statutes — two attempts have been made in the last 100 years. The trial's likely to attract headlines worldwide — and is pretty certain to be front page news here.

—Peter Burton

# montreal

**T**he big news here is the opening of a new gay disco on Drummond St. near Ste-Catherine. Same owners as Trux and the old Rocambole on Stanley St. The new club should be successful for several reasons: The straight owners know where their bread's buttered, and they treat gay clientele with respect, which is more than you can say for some gay-owned clubs.

For leather fans, the infamous Bud's (Stanley St.) is once again open for business — and fun! Gone are the neo-Laverne plastic and linoleum school of fine decorating and instead, a western look. There's no truth to the rumor that here S&M stands for sneakers and makeup.

The Continental-Montreal, the local bath owned by Steve Ostrow who owned the world-famous Continental Baths in N.Y., is in the news. The Continental "discovered" Bette Midler, Barry Manilow and Labelle. Well, Ostrow wants Montreal to take over where N.Y. left off. He's holding Sunday afternoon tryouts thru the summer.

Outdoor cruising here is wild during summer. Best nite spots are Dominion Square (downtown), Lafontaine Park (East End), the Baile and Tupper St. areas, and parts of Mount-Royal, affectionately dubbed the Swish Alps. Daytime cruising is best along Ste Catherine St. and its side streets or Old Montreal, if you can tell the gays from the straights.

If you prefer older gents, try the gin and tonics at the Kon-Tiki in the lobby of the Sheraton Mt. Royal. The later it is, the less discretion.

Sammy Davis Jr., Tom Jones and Shirley MacLaine perform at Place des Arts in July and August and Nureyev will dance with the National Ballet in Sept.

Summertime is the best time to visit Montreal. I love American visitors, so if you're coming, write me at 1905 Tupper, Apt. 61, Montreal, Quebec, or call (514) 284-1280. Best time is early a.m. or late nites. Merci et bonjour.

—Timothy Taylor

# berlin

**I**t's an astonishing document, exceeding even Genet's notorious *Querelle de Brest* or *Deathwatch* in its radical probing: *Hans Eppendorfer Talks to Hubert Fichte*. It's already been staged in condensed version by several German and Swiss theatres.

Hans Eppendorfer is a pseudonym of the editor of a German gay magazine and Hubert Fichte is a well-known author from Hamburg who's never hidden his interest in the gay scene, linking it with ethnologic rites and rituals which are still alive today in some aborigine societies and other voodoo, blood and death cults. Not long ago he interviewed Genet for the German magazine *Der Spiegel*.

The book offers 3 authentic (not edited) big interviews, from 1970, '73 and '76. When they first met, Eppendorfer was 28 and just out of prison, where he'd served 10 years for killing a woman. Eppendorfer is gay and an admitted 'S' in the international leather fraction. He is also unusually well-read, intelligent, and very articulate — as is Fichte, who's



now 42.

Between two of them, there's a fascinating dialogue about what makes modern man kill his opposite, blood, semen, urine, shit, and the role of sacrifice in modern society and its ancient roots. It's not at all a psychoanalytical case story of a murder, tho Fichte relentlessly drives Eppendorfer to tell everything — being brought up fatherless, his hateful relationship with his mother, and the dreadful social conditions of his after-war youth.

In great detail he tells about the murder and how this became almost an act of cleansing his past. Nor does he spare any detail of his frightful experiences in prison and their aftermath. It was the Hamburg gay scene which for the 1st time gave him the feeling of really belonging and of people who needed him. He drifted gradually into the leather scene with its intl. links and connections, leading him to heavier S&M in the exercise and torture rooms of Manhattan.

It's by no means a pleasant story — nor are there attempts to cover up the more atrocious facts of Eppendorfer's life. Being close to Pasolini's inner circle, he has his own ideas how Pasolini, after having put his all into the *Salo* movie which was to become his artistic testament, became the director of his own death by leaving the Roman boy, whom he'd picked up, no alternative than to kill him in ritualistic fashion.

It came as quite a shock to some people here, reading Eppendorfer's confessions of things happening in their very midst. Things which they thought occurred only among New York's drop-out fringe.

—Michael Hiller

## toronto

**I** N TOUCH is now available in the Toronto area. With this issue, the wails of lamentation over its quicksilver disappearance from newsstands should be quieted. Thousands of copies are finally here... enough for everyone!

Club Manatee is in the swim of things again after a lengthy closing for alterations and improvements. A welcome opening, too, for it's better than ever and populated by this town's creme de la creme.

Stratford Shakespearean Festival

opens its 25th season with "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and a great blaring of traditional trumpets. It'll be interesting to compare the very 1st production of "Richard III" with this year's revival. The 1st performances in a tent in 1952 were interrupted by wind, thunderstorms and trains whistle-stopping Stratford; at these anniversary offerings, you're likely to be distracted only by the many beautiful faces (with bods to match) and the scanty costuming. But then Shakespeare wouldn't have minded.

The residents of the sleepy little lakeshore town, Niagara-on-the-Lake, are steeling their nerves for the onslaught of theatre-goers when the Shaw Festival Summer Season ups its curtain with a production of "Man And Superman." Selected performances of this work during the season include the rarely performed "Don Juan in Hell" scene. So, pack a picnic, take your favorite by the hand and enjoy a day in another world.

— Bryan Crown

(continued from page 70)

### "MYSTERIES"

me." He shook his head. "I'll pay you. Tell me what you get and I'll pay you."

"I get fifty," he muttered, looking away.

I knew that wasn't true but I said, "Okay. But first..." I paused, seeking the right words. "First I have to know... whether you are doing it just for the money."

I could see the vein in his neck jumping. I waited. "I told you before. I like you."

That was all I needed. My heart, pumping like a bellows, did the rest. "Let's take a cab." I said.

We held hands going downtown. His was like a warm bird but he kept his head averted and said nothing. In the bedroom, he took off his clothes in the same methodical way. When he turned toward me, his eyes were still dull, unshining.

I maneuvered him to the bed. For the first time I noticed a scar on his upper arm. I touched it. He told me it as a fire scar from childhood. I kissed it; it seemed a necessary imperfection.

He was slower in getting aroused this time, but somehow that made it better, as if we were waiting to speak on a level where words did not count, where no lies were possible. I could almost feel him struggling against the responses of the flesh, and then, when he could no longer silence his body, he slammed his

lips against mine and pressed hard against me. I could hardly breathe, but when I started to push him away, I heard him moan and I saw that his eyes were velvety and deep, and I lay still. It was slower this time, all the way, as if we were plowing through some warm, resistant sea... but when the final wave came, crashing us to shore, it was as good as before. Perhaps better.

We didn't move for a long time. Just lay there, letting the music from the radio wash over us. The news came on almost without my noticing, making words that had no meaning. It was only the stir next to me, the sudden tension in that body, that alerted me.

"The Broadbent case... young man arrested... claimed he was hired by a real estate syndicate... seeking to clear site for construction... victim's nephew and heir also named..."

I turned on my side slowly. Dark eyes were measuring mine. "You knew him, didn't you?" I whispered.

A downward flicker of fringed eyelids. "Yeah."

"When?"

"About six months ago. He was a creep."

"Why were you afraid of me?"

The ghost of a smile. "'Cause you made up your mind. Just like that. I could tell."

"How?"

"From the way you sat up in bed. All of a sudden."

"That was just a reflex."

A shrug. Silence.

"I'm sorry, Sammy."

"That's okay." More silence. Then a light kiss that felt like forgiveness.

We had scrambled eggs and beer for dinner. There wasn't anything else in the house. Afterwards, we watched TV, then went back to bed. That night I didn't curl up in my lonely crouch — the first time in 37 days.

Since the subject didn't come up, he was probably surprised to find the money in his jacket pocket. Of course, I'm not sure — I wasn't there. It was the least I could do, considering. Considering that he had solved a little mystery for me — solved it with his blood and bones and sinews even before the radio announcement came on. Besides, the price of a one-way ticket to Puerto Rico won't bankrupt me. It's only a \$100.

Maybe you're wondering why I gave him anything at all. Guilt? Gratitude? Love? Well now, there's another mystery for you.



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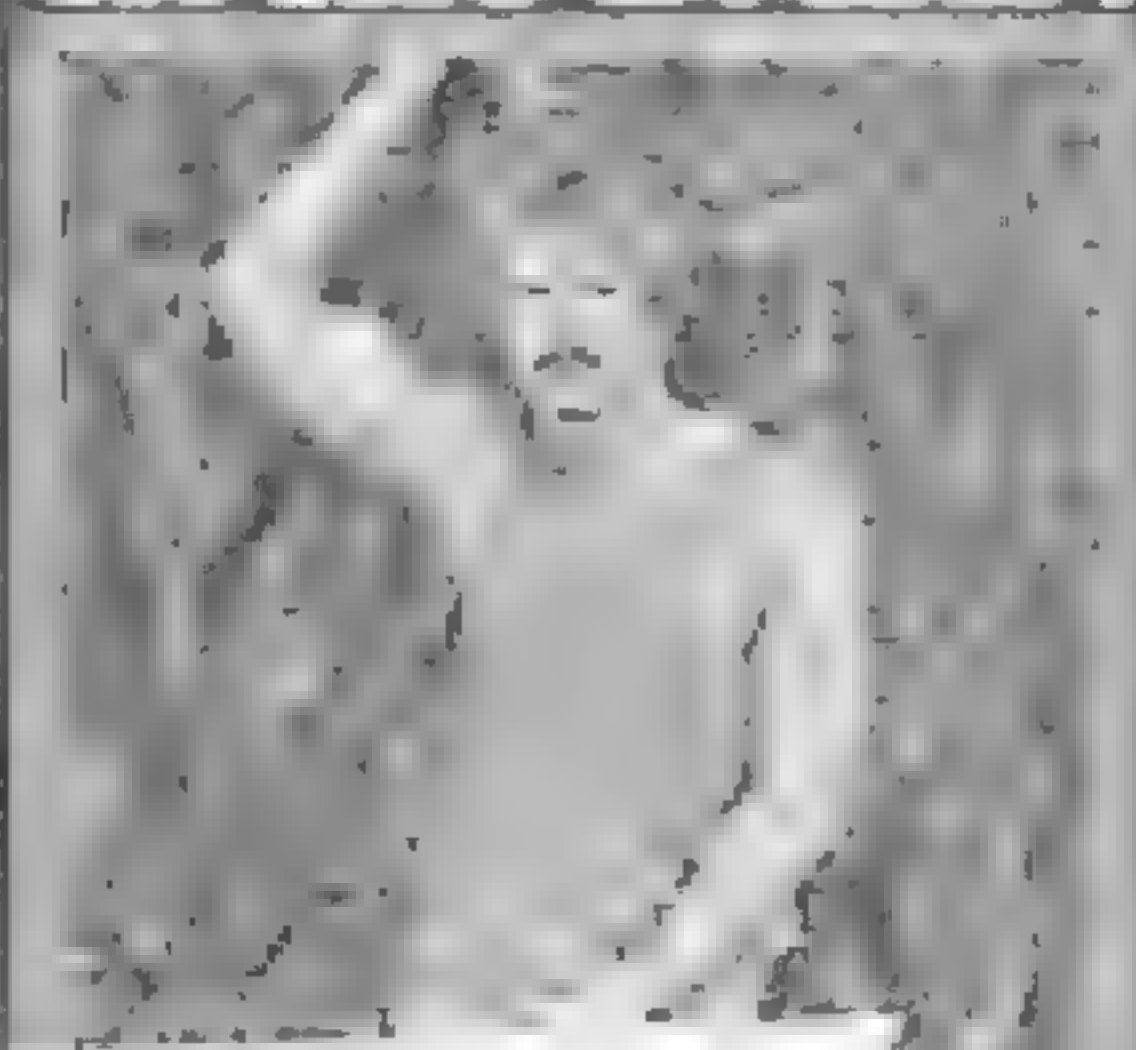
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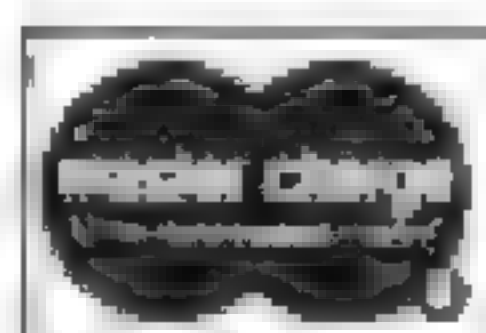
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# HOROS

## gemini

MAY 21—JUNE 21

Right now you have elements of sensationalism to contend with. Was it that number on the wall that actually answered when you phoned . . . or did the ad in the paper pay off? Whatever, it's supposed to be sensational. Check it out and if it measures up to your expectations, enjoy it. A friend may want a second chance to make good. So, he was a little stoned last time and couldn't get it up, does that make him a loser? Give him another go, but only after you've checked out this big deal you have coming. What's with you lately? Everything's coming your way.

## cancer

JUNE 22—JULY 22

There is an incentive now to be on your toes, but you don't have to tell your friends you are actually using those ballet shoes for dancing as well . . . surprise them and tell them you met Rudolf at work, even if you have to learn a little Russian. Tighten your purse strings, hold off on that big purchase for awhile and you might be in for a pleasant shock, he might actually give it away. Hedge your bets, don't gamble on an outsider . . . bring him indoors first and see what it looks like in a brighter light. It's time to spruce up your wardrobe a little. Throw out that old rag and check out the latest fashions, especially if he's wearing them.

## leo

JULY 23—AUGUST 23

Don't over-extend your credit right now. Pay on the dot. You may have the need to question a good friend, but if he won't give out his latest's number you can't blame him, find a number of your own and don't share him with a friend. Tease instead of tantrumming. Enjoy instead of envying . . . and go down once in awhile and find out where it's at. Long summer evenings bring out the best in us . . . it might be your shorts are too short or you may not even be wearing them, but they do bring out the best . . . and so quickly.

## virgo

AUGUST 24—SEPTEMBER 23

You may have to deal with temperamental people . . . slap 'em down, Duckie . . . you're the only star in your house. Show them who is boss, then get on with the dishes quietly. You should be able to squeeze more mileage out of what you've got, but it's pointless hanging weights on the end, they don't work. Have an expert look it over . . . if he's good looking and knows where it's at, it should rise up and he can take it from there, but not when you're doing the dishes of course. Venus is hanging about in heavens and has something interesting for you soon. Are you ready?

## libra

SEPTEMBER 24—OCTOBER 23

You are in your active social cycle now, dragging home all kinds of material from the beach. Flotsam and Jetsam or was it Flo and Jerry? Whatever, make the most of your catch, but stick to your everyday routine and ship them out after breakfast, however intimate you may be after midnight you don't really know your latest conquests and they may take a shine to your new camera and where would you be without your latest exposure. Sparkle, you're about to have a birthday.

## scorpio

OCTOBER 24—NOVEMBER 22

Do you question your impulses? Should I or should I not follow that into there? Well once in awhile you may take the bull by the horns and go ahead but be careful, your impulses tend to lead to excesses in the most inexplicable places . . . not, as yet, in Macy's window, but who can tell? There will be a special inducement to join a group or social circle, so get out the knitting, or if so inclined, the motorbike and sidecar. You ride the bike and DRINK the Sidecar . . . Have fun and send your overseas friends a sweater.



# SCOPE

By ROGER ASQUITH

## sagittarius

NOVEMBER 23—DECEMBER 21

Avoid flare-ups at this period. If he hasn't done the dishes for the 10th time this week you shouldn't have kept him up so late. Don't shilly-shally and busy yourself with tasks that have to be done . . . including the dishes. You can always offer up a prayer to Madge for those beautiful hands. Do I see marriage on the horizon or is it a honeymoon without the benefit of clergy? Whatever, it seems like somebody is going to benefit. Grab it all, Baby and have a ball . . . just nibble on the wedding cake . . . it's fattening.

## capricorn

DECEMBER 22—JANUARY 20

Neighbors seem to be poking their noses . . . or whatever into your life. Is it the thin walls or do you have a convenient hole in the fence . . . for them to spy through, of course. Whatever, be nice, accept the cup of sugar they brought you and invite them to the next orgy. Be suspicious of anyone who gives you a hard sell . . . Yes, we know it's better than a soft sell, but try and get it for free; after all you're not over the hill yet. An old love will contact you. If he wants the money you owe him, pay . . . if he wants to fan the dying flame, tell him to use his own candle.

## aquarius

JANUARY 21—FEBRUARY 18

Co-workers may suggest a novel approach to friend raising. If you have had problems raising your friend listen to what they have to say. But then again if your friend can't get a raise on his own . . . don't bother to raise yours . . . it takes two to tangle. Social events cause you to be away from the pad more than usual, but be wise, don't sleep around too much or you might come home and find somebody else in your bed . . . roommates are like that you know . . . they too like a little variety. Pay attention to obligations. Invite some guests over to the next orgy and let them come first.

## pisces

FEBRUARY 19—MARCH 20

You may be pulled in so many directions you hardly know which way to come . . . of course it depends who is doing the pulling, but don't complain, it's better than doing it yourself. Take on greater responsibility . . . you know you can handle it . . . and if it's bigger than you thought, groan a little and try harder. Avis did and she got pregnant. Avoid being pressured into something or someone you don't want to do. If you don't get turned on, turn off and resume fishing . . . but don't wait until your pier collapses.

## aries

MARCH 21—APRIL 20

You are not likely to do things in an ordinary way right now, but what is ordinary? Take a tip from Mother Nature and don't go the margarine route, we don't need any earth shattering experiences right now; besides, some other products smell better and are easier to wash off . . . so live it up, butter your bread on both sides. It's a good time to start a vacation, the beaches are swarming with surfers, beach bums and broiling torsos under the sun . . . and the sun isn't bad either. Take your pick, but first take off a few pounds and firm up that waistline.

## taurus

APRIL 21—MAY 20

Taurus . . . and they say you are quiet, not easy to arouse and patient. Well, you certainly have an arousal coming up. Don't get too excited and blow your cork . . . there are better things in store. You might ease that cool frame of yours into some better fitting threads and show off that cute ass . . . so . . . you're the only one in the block that owns a donkey. If you haven't been feeling yourself lately, who has? . . . somebody has been tickling your fancy and making you happy. Whoever has been getting to you, tell him to wait in line — you have an arousal coming up . . . or has he already discovered it?

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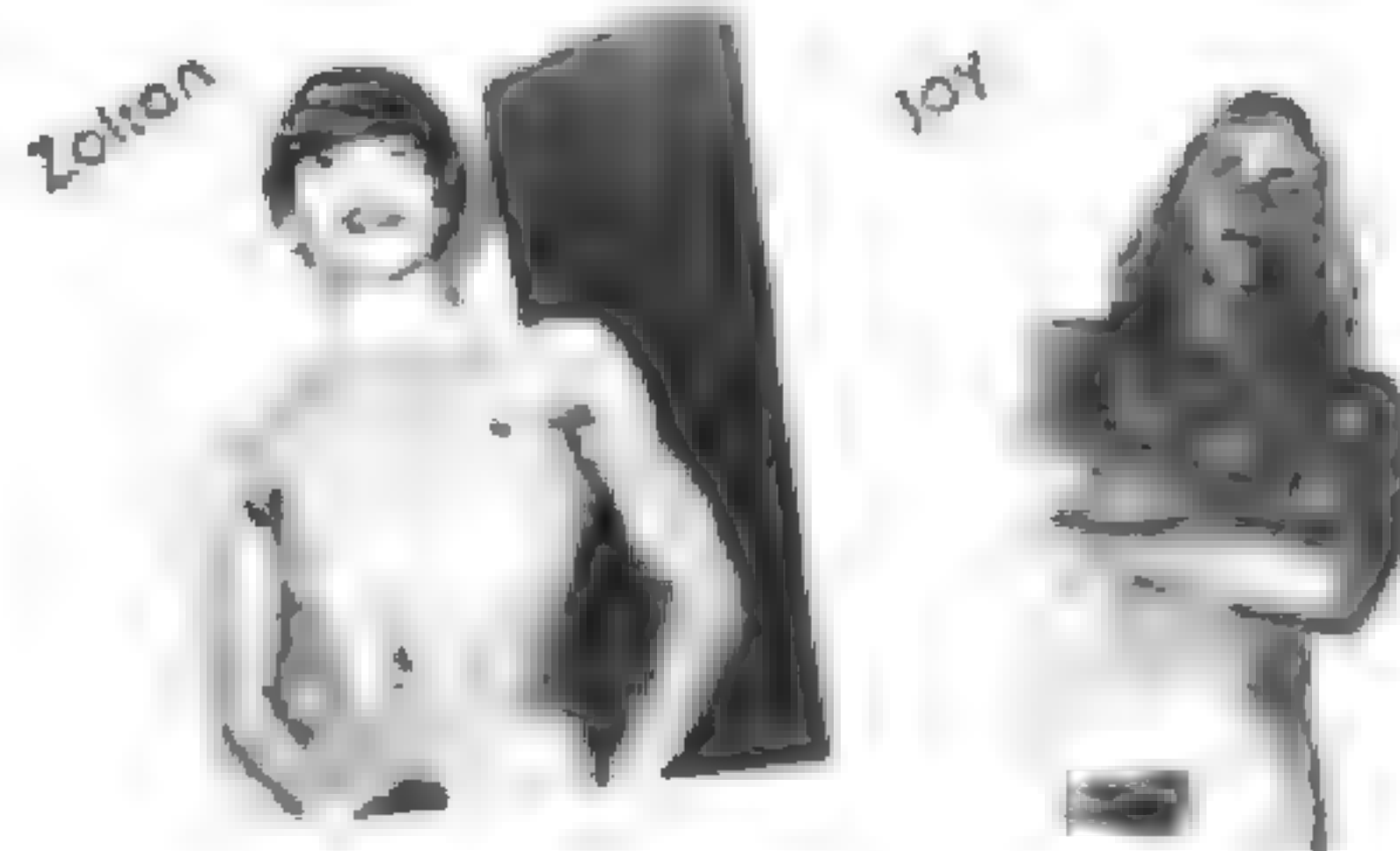
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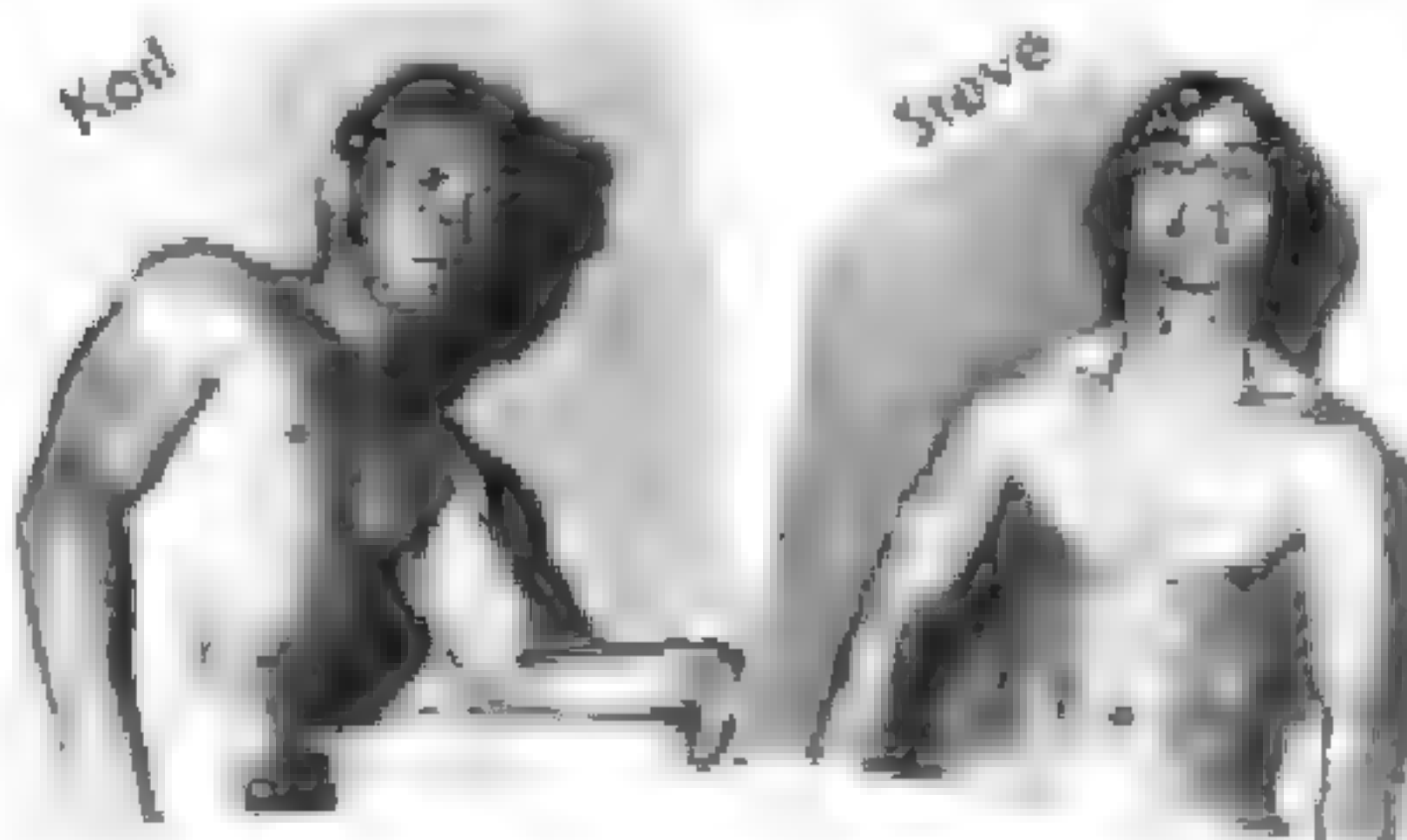
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## LETTERS

### Loved "Gymnasts"

I've been meaning to take the time to thank you for including your photo essay "Gymnasts Together" in the Mar./Apr. issue. It's great seeing muscles and posture so natural and unaffected. Don't get me wrong — I love to see cocks and huns — but this stuff is all over today. True art photography — hope we see more of the same.

T.N.  
San Francisco

### They Love Us

*IN HEAT* is nearly as good as *IN TOUCH*. Keep up the good work — *IN TOUCH* is far and away the best magazine on the market today.

George Chester  
New Jersey

I've been a subscriber for 2 years and have always liked *IN TOUCH*. But your recent issue (No. 28) is so super I had to commend you for putting out the best gay magazine in the field. Your photos, interviews, features and the rest are so enjoyable that it's difficult to single out what I like best; but your photos of Jeffrey show him as one of the most appeal-

ing guys I've ever seen — his face, body and that beautiful uncut cock are superb! Blue is another attractive person, also uncut. Guess I'm partial to the uncircumcised penis and you give us more than the other gay magazines do.

Another amazing aspect of your magazine is its price. We get 100 pages (counting front and back covers) of the highest quality of any gay magazine and at the lowest price. I don't know how you do it. I tell all my friends that they ought to subscribe. . . .

Gordon Harvey  
New York

Let me compliment your excellent publication. I've probably read most, if not all, of your so-called "competitors," but not one comes close in info and entertainment. Yours is the only one I've seen that turns me on mentally and physically. And tho it seems hard to believe, you get better with each issue. (I especially like your new feature "People" — that in itself's worth the price.) All I can say is please keep up the (very) good work!

However, before you get too swollen-headed, I do have a "complaint." Couldn't you publish *IN TOUCH* monthly? Two months is a hell of a long wait between issues!

Also, I have a couple requests. Is it possible in upcoming issues to report on: (1) Calvin Culver (Casey Donovan)? I do have your July, 1974, issue, but for me that's not enough. I'm interested in what he's doing now. (I'd like to see him in some color pix!) (2) That hunky stud on the back cover of your Jan./Feb. '77 issue (Falcon ad). Who's that guy???

D.S.  
Illinois

*IN TOUCH* looks to be a bi-monthly for some time. But waits won't seem so long if you start reading our new "hot" magazine, *IN HEAT*, a quarterly. No plans at present to re-do Casey Donovan or to feature the fellow in the Falcon ad. Suggest you check with them.

### Uncut Models

THANK YOU! You finally did it! Thank you so very much for your unusually pleasant pictorials using uncut models. It's about time a gay magazine shows the uncut as well as the cut model. I hope to see uncut models in every one of your forthcoming issues. Uncuts are in.

Stuardt-Mikhail Clarke  
San Francisco

*We agree and you will.*

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(continued from page 21)

A.E. HOUSMAN

beloved Mo will never grow a day older or a pound heavier. He will always be young, triumphant, because of the victory of the memory (and of art) over life. Had Jackson remained in London, Housman might well have tired of him, and their love might well have withered. Because he has died, he remains untouched, preserved intact in the poet's memory and art. Each poem of Housman's is a tribute to that victory over time. He has erected a shrine to the memory of the athlete who will never age and never tire.

The poem also has an interesting "hidden" meaning. Housman contrasts the "laurel" of the athlete with the "rose." By so doing, he contrasts male beauty with female, and for alert readers, suggesting the superiority of male beauty in traditional Greek terms. The Greek ideal of pederasty always suggested that male beauty was greater precisely because it was so limited — the Greeks admired the physical beauty of no man once he was past adolescence. The poignant beauty of the beardless boy was intensified by the knowledge that it could last at most a few years, unlike the beauty of woman which was longer lasting and less intense. The athlete's garland is "briefer than a girl's" but greater, too. Housman doubtless felt that his love for Mo was like that Greek ideal, gaining its burning intensity from its brevity and the inevitability of its passing.

If Housman's imagination pictured Mo as the athlete dying young, it seems to have pictured himself as the older poet-lover, drawn from Greek convention. But sometimes it toyed with the possibility of self-destruction. All great love stories end in death, and Housman wrote with feeling and compassion of suicides. For himself he chose a kind of public death — death to the world, which knew nothing whatever of his private life. The year 1895 was clearly a crucial year in Housman's life — the great majority of the *Shropshire Lad* poems were written in this year. He passed through a period of deep depression, a depression that he described as a kind of antidote against despair. Two events of that year were particularly important for him — the suicide of a cadet he memorialised in Poem XLIV of *A Shropshire Lad* and the trial and con-

viction of Oscar Wilde which prompted one of his greatest poems, "Oh who is that young sinner with the handcuffs on his wrists?"

The cadet had killed himself to avoid "moral injury" to others, and because "There is only one thing in this world which would make me thoroughly happy; that one thing I have no earthly hope of obtaining." Housman clearly identified with the sense of despair that drove the cadet to kill himself and praised the young man who "died as fits a man." He concluded his poem about "the soul that should not have been born" with praise similar to that of "To An Athlete Dying Young":

*And here, man, here's  
the wreath I've made:  
'Tis not a gift that's  
worth the taking,  
But wear it and it  
will not fade.*

The self-hate and doubt of this period of Housman's life is reflected in his praise of the Stoic doctrine of suicide rather than dishonor. But even in this dark poem, the final stanza offers a partial ironic reversal. The poem becomes the cadet's laurel wreath, and the poet by crowning him with glory redeems his life from its ignominious end. The cadet dies but is made immortal through the action of the poet. The irony lies in this very victory over death, and in the ambiguity of the wreath: is the young man praised for his suicide alone, or, subtly, for the damned love that drove him to it?

There is no ambiguity, however, in Housman's poetic response to the trial of Oscar Wilde. Housman, like many gays in England then, was deeply shocked by the cruelty and vindictiveness of the unexpected sentence of two years at hard labor. If he had ever considered "coming out," it was clear after 1895 that this was impossible. It was now not merely a matter of losing his job (he was professor of Latin at London's University College), the Wilde trial showed that one risked imprisonment as well, in what the judge called "the worst case I have ever tried." Housman recorded his reaction and left the completed poem among his papers, published after his death. It's the strongest indictment by anyone

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of the prejudice and hatred that went into the conviction of England's greatest dramatist and wit for the simple fact of his homosexuality, a fact so trivial and arbitrary in the larger moral scheme that Housman calls it in his poem "the colour of his hair." The poem's almost perfectly structured, from its first stanza spoken by a neutral observer who wonders who this sinner can be and what he can have done "that they groan and shake their fists." The next two stanzas are spoken by voices from the crowd, self-righteous moralizers who agree with the sentence or even think that it should be made harsher ("hanging isn't bad enough and flaying would be fair"). Finally, the poem concludes with another neutral, but bitter view of Wilde the prisoner, on the treadmill and the workgang:

*And between his spells  
of labour in the time  
he has to spare  
He can curse the God  
that made him for the  
colour of his hair.*

This last couplet brilliantly conveys Housman's wrath against a supposedly divine world, ruled by Christian charity, in which such monumental injustice can occur. At the same time it expresses the idiocy of a conventional world that condemns men for superficial features (the colour of his hair) over which the individuals have no control. The conviction of Wilde confirmed Housman's conviction that he inhabited a godless world.

After the excited energy of 1895 and its conclusion in the publication of *A Shropshire Lad* the next year, Housman's withdrawal seemed complete. He didn't publish another book of poems until 1922, more than 40 years after he'd left Oxford. The intensity of *A Shropshire Lad* has calmed a bit, and Housman's tone is more often cynical. Man's cries against injustice seem futile:

*We for a certainty are  
not the first  
Have sat in taverns  
while the tempest hurled  
Their hopeful plans to  
emptiness, and cursed  
Whatever brute and  
blackguard made the  
world.*

What is there to do but accept,  
"Shoulder the sky, my lad, and drink  
your ale."

One of the best-known poems from this second volume, *Last Poems*, is his "Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries" which uses the same Atlas image in order to praise, not those who abandon, but those who stay and do the work of others. It's a poem in praise of the ordinary, and particularly the ordinary soldier, to whom Housman was attracted. The "mercenaries" are not criticized for acting out of duty, for "Their shoulders held the sky suspended." It's the ordinary who preserve the world. No longer is he attracted by death, and now he urges his "lad" to "shepherd your sheep with me." The pastoral world seems regained, at least in part, and the here and now is praised, in a Marvellian plea for pleasures now:

*Oh stay with company and  
mirth  
And daylight and the air;  
Too full already is the  
grave  
Of fellows that were good  
and brave  
And died because they  
were.*

He even managed to finish a poem prompted by the 1889 marriage of Moses Jackson and undertaken first in 1895. The poem, an "Epithalamium" (or poem celebrating marriage) is very odd, since it balances the two couples, friend and friend and husband and wife: "Friend and comrade yield you o'er / To her that hardly loves you more." The poem imitates Shakespeare's advice, in his sonnets, to his lover to marry and beget children, and amounts to Housman's statement that he is reconciled to his friend's marriage at last (a copy of *Last Poems* including the "Epithalamium" reached Jackson in Vancouver shortly before his death). Housman hadn't forgotten, but he'd forgiven the world.

Housman's new feeling of acceptance may have been aided by Andrea the gondolier he met in 1900. Almost nothing is known about this relationship, but it's clear that Housman, the distinguished Latin scholar and professor remained in close contact with the simple gondolier for over 25 years, going to see Andrea one last time in 1926, as An-

drea lay dying and asking to see Housman once again. No poems record this relationship, but one poem, "Hell Gate," is a fantasy of rebellion against the powers of Hell. The landscape of the poem is Dantesque, with touches of Edgar Allan Poe, but with Housman's very own touch in the figure of the red-coated sentry, "in his finery of fire." This sentry recalls other, rather different, young men: "Soldiers of another corps / And a sentry known before." The narrator of the poem is in front of the gate of Hell, but the sentry and he have known each other, and so form an alliance against Hell. The "master" of Hell is vanquished, and all that remains is "a pair of friends alone" who begin "the backward way," the path back from Hell. The imagery of the poem links this satanic scene to the Biblical Sodom, but in Housman's revision of the scene the divine condemnation of Sodom doesn't prevail. Instead it's the power of love that triumphs as the narrator and the soldier escape, unpursued, from the Gate of Hell. It's Housman's most positive, and most revolutionary, vision, of the human capacity to triumph over man's condition and to proclaim the power of love to defy the power of a condemning world.

It was rare, though, that Housman could offer such a vision, and it is not one of his better-known poems, perhaps because it represents an unusual moment in which the poet visualized a better world. Under Housman's icy exterior there remains the passionate heart that loved Mo Jackson, that hated the world which persecuted Oscar Wilde, and killed the sentry, and so many of the Shropshire lads, and that travelled across Europe to be with his dying gondolier. That "secret" Housman lived in his poetry, in the half-comic persona of Terence Hearday, and in Housman's own identification of himself:

*I, a stranger and afraid  
In a world I never made.*

Once out of the "land of lost content," Housman was never really happy with any other. His poems are an important testimony to his suffering and his love, and to his own recognition of the injustice of "a world I never made."

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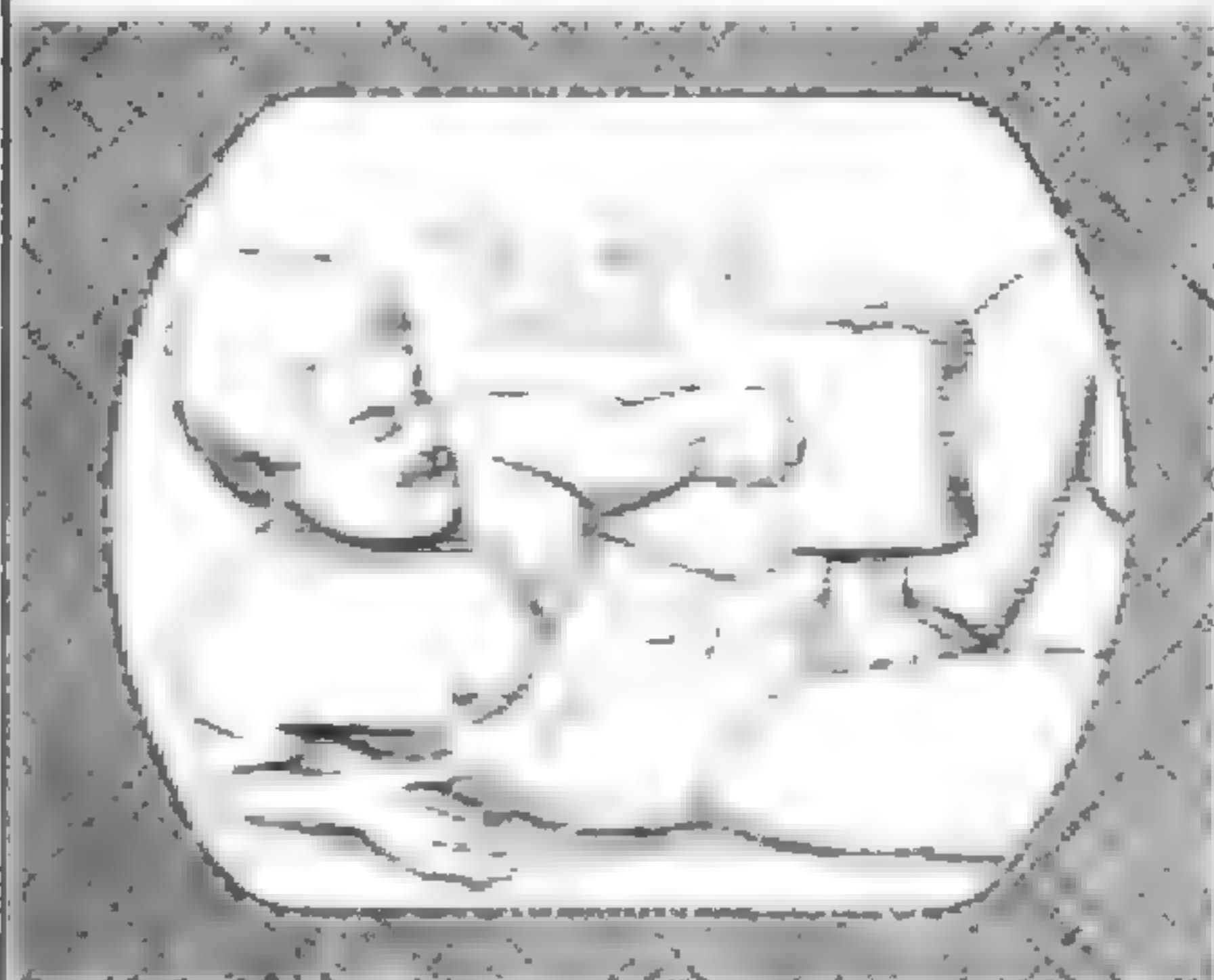
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(continued from page 25)

WASHINGTON, D.C.

all pleasures — warm, wooly, wonderful, real people. Not so incidentally. The Eagle is a superb place to have dinner at reasonable prices, and what an experience it is to sit down and have a young chap in chaps come up to wait on you, thrust a shapely crotch at chin level, and, oh-so-politely croon, "May I take your order?" Gleeps!

Continuing down the corridor, you'll find the tiny Chesapeake House at H Street, Carroll's Tavern just above E Street, Louie's and The Hideaway, both at Pennsylvania Ave. Carroll's is the 1st gay bar ever opened here, and has survived since the World War II years, a landmark: Louie's was the leather place before the advent of The Eagle and still has a loyal following (the back of the first floor is wiyuld on weekend nites) plus a 2nd story with drag shows and a 3rd floor with a country-western juke box; The Hideaway is in the basement of The Hickory House, and has recently been remodeled.

Finally, "the warehouse district," straddling So. Capitol St. in Southeast and Southwest, was, as recently as 6 months ago, known as the place to boogie in gay D.C. But, suddenly, people seem to have become tired of getting robbed and mugged while blacks and women are turned off by what they call discrimination and silly dress codes in these super-discos. The Grand Central has reopened as The Chapter II and is reputedly eager to attract blacks. The Pier Nine is another grand disco which has become a favorite weekend spot for curious straights! The Lost And Found is controversial because many feel the atmosphere is cold and unfriendly, while others will go nowhere else. The L&F is unquestionably one of the best places to dine, with the most varied menu of any gay spot in town.

Eighth St. S.E. between E and I, is the lesbian ghetto. Women's bars abound in this Marine Barracks neighborhood which may be reassuring to the corps commanders, but The Towne House is there, too, and there's an awful lot of awfully short hair on some of those heavy males around the billiard table! The Towne House is best known as a pleasant dining spot.

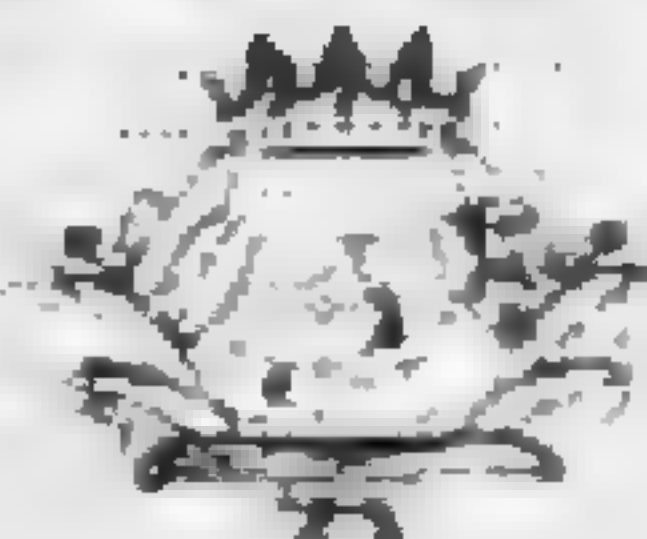
Here, a couple of geographic anomalies: C.T.'s, in the 3400 block of Connecticut Ave., is a quiet, intimate



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cruise bar, soon to be renamed Art's. It's hard to find but well worth searching for. The Paramount Steak House (1519 17th St., N.W.) has the biggest martinis imaginable and stupendous steak dinners. The place is tiny and very popular, so there's no hope without reservations.

Outdoor cruising? Yes. But with the exception of "The Block," they're pure suicide, and I cannot, in good conscience, speak of them here. Anyone interested in his own destruction will find them easily enough, but anyone wanting to return home in one piece take this advice: STAY AWAY.

Now, about "The Block": quite another story. It's a wide area of Georgetown streets (the young Kennedy's lived there and, Kissinger does) where cruising on foot and behind wheel goes on all night. With relish. All is very open, having the approval of the locals who've said they feel gay cruising helps keep the neighborhood safe! But they're unhappy if their property isn't respected, or if the noise is too much, in which case you may encounter Washington's Finest, ready to cool you down. Neat guys wander this area, many of them well-known activists. DC Gay Pride is here. Walk up Wisconsin Ave. from M St., turn right just past The Georgetown Grill, walk, look, select, enjoy.

Soon, the bright east coast sun streams thru windows, inviting you back to the streets. Maybe the libido needs a rest while the "cultural hump" gets a workout. Well, you're in the seat of government and you can tour that Capitol building. If Congress is in session, you can watch the lawmakers at work . . . very revealing. White House tours are over if you've slept past noon, so, maybe tomorrow — be up by 10. You've probably seen The Monument (devilishly dubbed "The National Shaft") from many different places, as this incredible phallic formation looms high over the city. Ride to the top and look around. A cheap, legal high that's unforgettable!

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Art buffs may want to begin at The National Gallery (6th and Constitution N.W.) then go across

(continued on page 89)

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(continued from page 39)

## BURT REYNOLDS

*Candidate, Smile, The Bad News Bears*) Ritchie, whom Reynolds calls "one of the very few filmmakers today who has some kind of style. What he did to beauty contests in *Smile* has been long overdue. We do it to EST and pyramid power in this. Kristofferson's very much into EST — he can't catch a football unless he's been to an EST session before the game."

Reynolds calls *Semi-Tough* "probably the culmination of all the Southern characters I've played... It may well be the best thing I've done, but it's still light years away from what I see myself doing."

When Reynolds and I first met, 5 years ago, the fuss over the *Cosmopolitan* centerfold had died down, *Deliverance* was ready for release, and he thought he was on his way to being taken seriously as an actor. Despite a few more tentative steps in that direction (*The Longest Yard* and *Hustle*, e.g.), he's spent most of his time starring in genre films (*Shamus, Fuzz, White Lightning, Smokey and the Bandit*) and expensive bombs (*Lucky Lady, At Long Last Love*).

"I take the best of what's offered to me," he says. "I'm not one of these guys who saves it up to do one picture a year. I do 2½ a year. See, I don't have a family; so work is it for me." As for his choices, "Sometimes it's because financially I'd be a fool to turn down that kind of money; other times I owe somebody a favor or there's a young director trying to get his 1st shot, so I give him the shot."

Reynolds got his 1st shot at directing last year with *Gator*, a sequel to the vastly superior *White Lightning*. "I wanted to direct so bad. I would have done anything," he says. "They sent me the script while I was doing *Lucky Lady*, and it was a piece of shit."

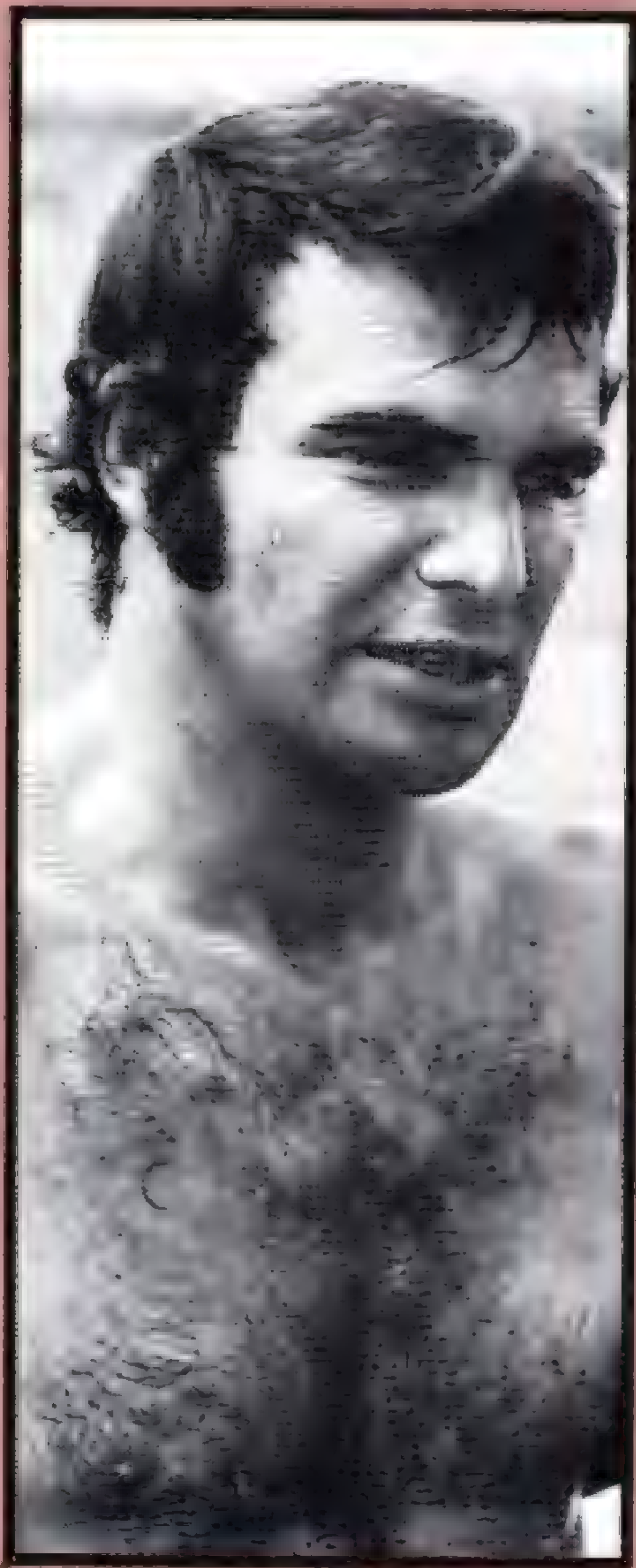
"So I rewrote it, trying to put something worthwhile into it. I wrote in the love scene on the beach. I'm proud of that scene; I don't think Lauren Hutton's come close to what she did in it, before or since."

"I wrote in one part where a guy asks me, 'Does homosexuality really go on in prison?' and I say, 'Yeah' — just throw it away and leave it there. I could have said 'Nah,' but I didn't. And you never found out what this guy's scene was, why he was asking."

As for camerawork, Reynolds wanted some unusual composition, especially since he was saddled with Panavision. But he hired veteran

cinematographer, William Fraker, who was used to "shooting every scene with a face in the cross-hairs."

I would set up a shot the way I wanted it and come back after the scene to find he'd rearranged it to get that face in the old cross-hairs. After about a week of that, I said, 'Bill let's get this straight. It's my name that's gonna be up there, and I'm the one who goes in the toilet if it doesn't work. So let's do it my way.' "



*White Lightning*, 1973

He only really got carried away once. "I did this one shot where we went up and in and over and around — it was a form of masturbation; and it was the first thing I cut when I got back to Hollywood."

Considering the budget, the script and other limitations, Reynolds is pleased with the way *Gator* turned out: "Under the conditions, I think it was sensational!"

The important thing to Hollywood is that it made money, so he's now at work directing another movie. "I almost had to direct it to get cast in it," he says. "It was written for

Woody Allen. It's a picture called *The End*.

"It's a black comedy — strange comedy. It isn't sophisticated comedy, which is something I like to do very much; but it is comedy. It's the story of a guy who thinks he's dying, and all the crazy things you do... the black humor that comes out of death."

I mention Bruce Dern's contention that Paul Newman won't star in *The Front Runner* unless it's rewritten so that the coach isn't gay. It would be, Reynolds says, like changing *The End* so he doesn't die — which the studio tried to insist on.

He wouldn't mind doing *The Front Runner* himself — "It would depend on the screenplay... I would play a gay person if it was something meaningful and interesting..."

"Actually — and I'm being quite candid now — I'd be much more afraid of doing a love story with a black than playing a homosexual. My audience is so redneck." Motown, he says, has asked him to do a remake of *Nothing Sacred*, with Diana Ross in the Carole Lombard role. He hasn't made up his mind.

"It'd really be good chemistry," Reynolds says. "We still may do it, but I'm afraid... There's always ¼ of me that thinks about the right thing to do, economically; but the rest of me says 'The hell with it' and goes ahead and does what it wants to do."

Reynolds is famous for his self-deprecating humor; but he stresses that he only makes fun of his image, not his acting: "People somehow get the two confused." As for the image, "You've got to have fun with it; otherwise you end up like Marilyn Monroe."

"Where you goin', Pappy?" "I'm an old sex symbol," he mocks toothlessly. "There's nowhere to go. It's a terrible fall from there. As long as you're making fun of it, you can't get hurt too badly."

"You get asked these simple questions: 'What's it like being a sex symbol?' And there's no way to answer without acting like a total ass. 'Well, it's wonderful' or 'It's not too good' — there's just no way to come out of it alive!"

With his quick wit, there's no way Burt Reynolds won't come out of an interview alive. And if his movies don't make him live forever, his restaurant — er, Joint — will. If the one in Atlanta is a hit don't be surprised if Burt's Joint starts springing up everywhere!



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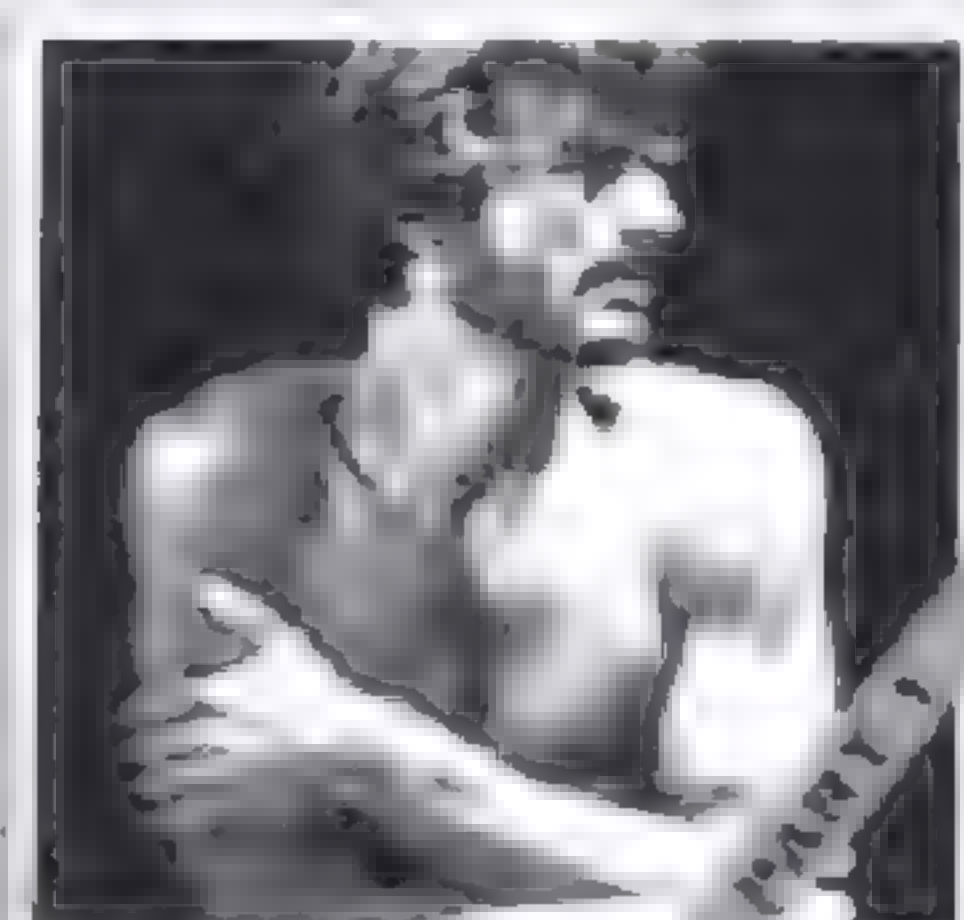
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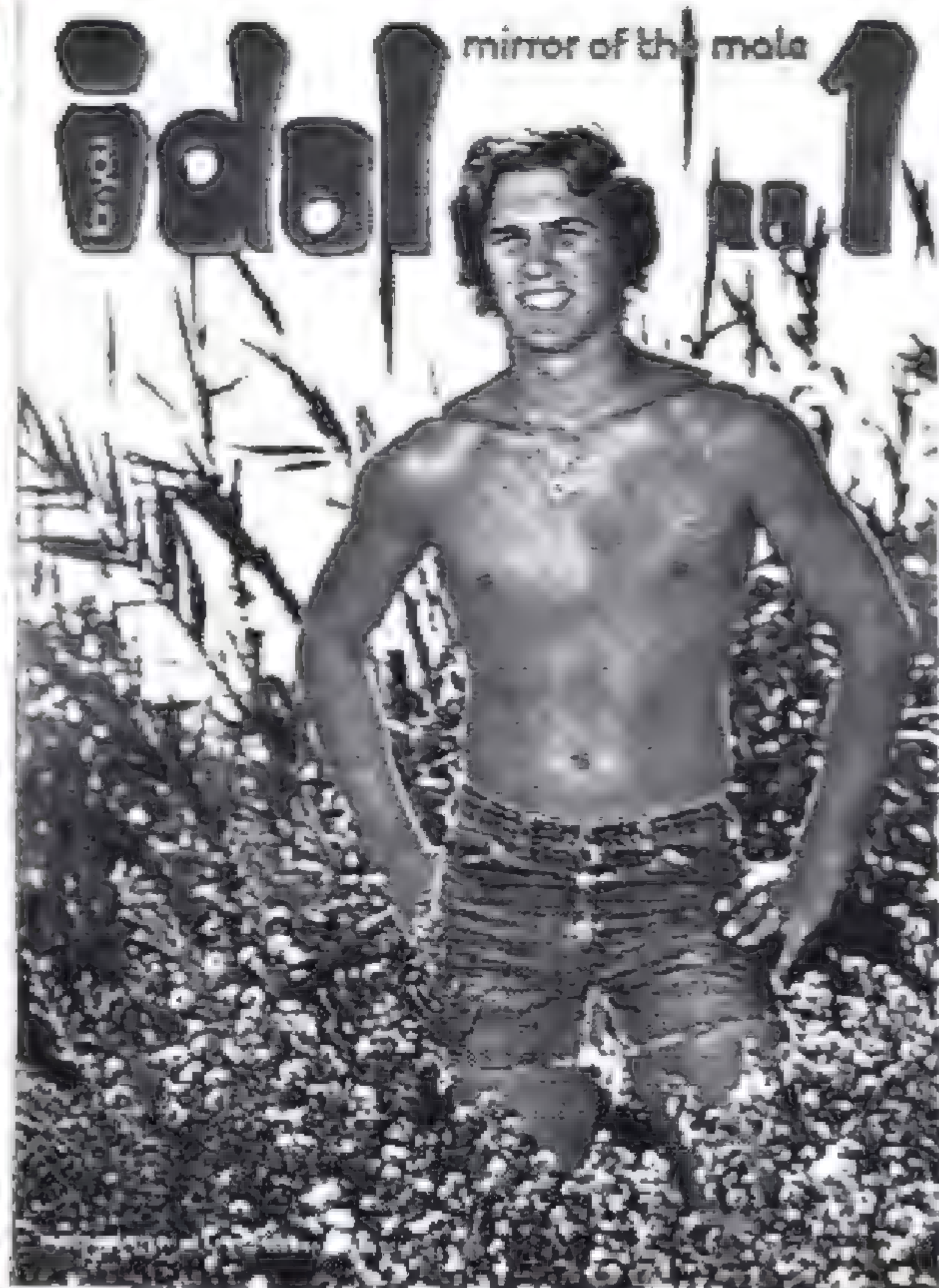
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## Washington, D.C.

the mall to the new Hirshhorn Museum and on to The Smithsonian next door, a tour which will take at least a day, leaving the Aeronautics And Space Museum so near and yet so far! On the 4th St. side of the mall, this new addition to Smithsonian features a "Star Trek" exhibit and a sci-fi pie that'll blow your mind.

Devotees of esoterica will want to take in the DuPont Circle to see The Phillips Collection and the small galleries in proximity to it and, above all, The Coreoran, located at 17th St. and New York Ave. The Coreoran has one of the east coast's acclaimed art schools.

As nite comes, so do new horizons. Thanks to the "moral" zeal of our city fathers' "Bicentennial Clean-up," we now have only one gay porn house, The Cinema Follies, in the warehouse dist. (37 I. Street, S.E.), is open from noon to 5 a.m. There's a \$2 membership fee plus admission. If the films work you up, wander towards the dark area on the right . . . you may work it out there.

Adult bookstores on the 9th St. corridor and the 14th St. "strip" (between H and I N.W.) have hard-core doings in the 25c machines and the behavior of the quarter bearers is raunchy too.

Washington has only 2 baths, the ubiquitous Club Chain has a posh facility but have your membership card ready. Walk-ins without sponsorship are rejected. The Regency also wants membership, but there's no screening. It's a little more down to earth and the orgies have smaller casts.

For theatre-goers, The John F. Kennedy Center For The Performing Arts houses booked-in shows en route to New York. There are also daytime tours and theatre exhibits. Arena Stage is the U.S.'s leading regional theatre, with productions in 3 theatres simultaneously: the 811-seat arena, the intimate Kreeger (499 seats) and plays in-the-process in The Old Vat Room, its namesake the 1st space the company had in an old brewery. Shakespeare fans will like The Folger Theatre, a division of The Folger Shakespeare Library, just behind the Capitol. The restored Ford's Theatre and Lincoln Museum downtown (10th St. N.W.) is of historic and hystriomic interest, while more enterprising and less fanciful fare is at The New Playwright's

Theatre, Back Alley Theatre with 2 performing spaces, the Playhouse and The Studio, the ASTA theatre (12th St. N.W., near Ford's) or The Washington Theatre Lab where disciples of the Grotowski school are. There's lighter fare at the many dinner theatres in the Virginia and Maryland suburbs, listed in the Sunday edition of *The Washington Post*.

Music? The National Symphony is one of the finest under Antal Dorati's gifted guidance, playing pairs of midweek concerts at the Ken Cen. For rock, bluegrass, whatever, a free copy of *The Unicorn Times* will enlighten you on the many clubs, mostly in the Georgetown / DuPont Circle area, particularly The Bayou, underneath the K St. Freeway, where The Nighthawks work often.

These are 3 humpy, sexy men — the one I like most performs in red long johns with a tear in the seat. You may leave this teddibly straight club not having danced, not having made eye contact, definitely not having groped, and horny beyond repair. The Cellar Door and Child Harold book in good groups and, for BIG names, drive that rented car to Largo, Maryland's Capitol Centre.

And there it is . . . a nutshell of Washington, the home of Jimmy Carter, metropolis of non-natives, center of judgements that affect our lives, vortex of black America, and home of gays!

*Frank Akers has moved to California and will continue to freelance for IN TOUCH*





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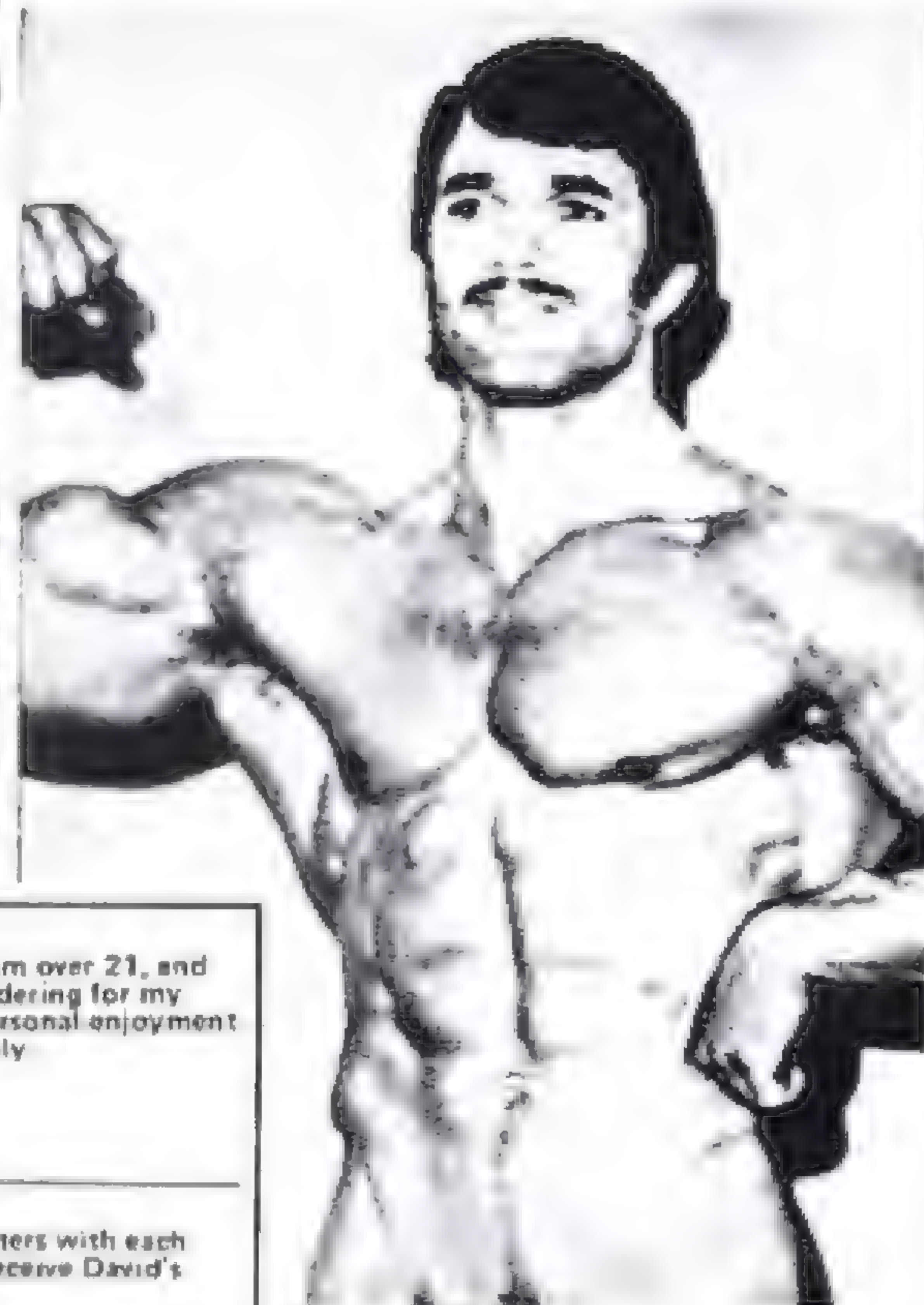
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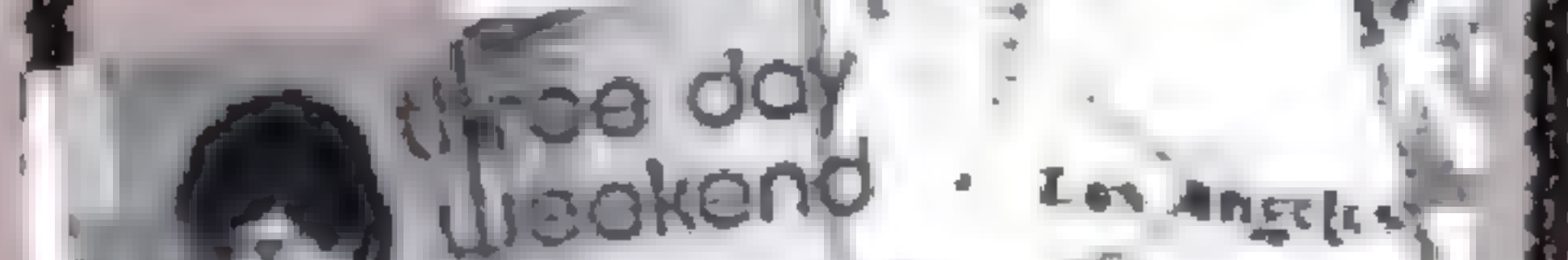
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**EROTIC ART OF CHINA, A**  
*Unique Collection of Chinese Prints and Poems Devoted to the Art of Love*, introd. by Abraham Franzblau (Crown Publishers, \$12.95, 160 pgs.) features 52 fine color prints each accompanied by a short descriptive poem taken from larger collections assembled by Dutch diplomat and mystery writer R.H. van Gulik, whose *Sexual Life In Ancient China* is a hard to find classic. Except for prints showing lesbian contact, this set is entirely hetero-focused. Gulik at least took note of homosexuality when he encountered it. A visual delight.




More balanced in Brassai's *THE SECRET PARIS OF THE '30s* (Pantheon, \$17.95) with fotos and commentary from Paris nites back when most of the subjects didn't realize nighttime photography was possible. Moving, moody shots in sepia tone: of Notre Dame's gargoyles keeping watch on city lights; a street carnival; many lovers, hoods, prostitutes, ragged elders, and 20 pgs. of text and fotos of gay bars and a drag ball. Butch or femme roles were near absolute for lesbians. Men's costumes were more varied, their expressions less frozen into their roles.

**BUGHOUSE BLUES.** An Intimate Portrait of Gay Hustling in Chicago, by Gerald Nicotia and Richard Raff (Vantage Press, 516 W. 34th St., N.Y. 10001, \$7.95, 207 pgs.) delivers what the title says. Scene: Chicago's tiny Newberry Park. Views of several hustlers and their johns, neither clinical nor popularized, with considerations of future prospects for the scene and those in it.

**MEDIA SEXPLOITATION.** *The Hidden Implants in America's Mass Media — and How They Program and Condition Your Subconscious Mind*, by William Bryan Key (Prentice Hall, \$8.95, 234 pgs.) will, like astrology, scientology and flying saucers, seem self-evident to some. Key says that political posters, magazine covers, fashion ads and god-knows-what-else, are super-printed with some kind of invisible ink which goes right to your subconscious mind with the aim of making you transsexual, or at least homosexual. That *Playboy* cover or Carter poster, if you squint hard enough, has the words, "sex," "death," or "cancer" printed all over it, and on top of that, the lady probably has a barely visible penis drawn on her crotch . . . Or maybe it's in the eyes of the beholder.

**VICE VERSA** by "Casimir Dukahz" (Coltsfoot Press, 507 Fifth Ave., N.Y. 10007, \$10, 264 pgs.) is called a novel and seems to be a sequel to *The Asbestos Diary*. Several pages are printed in columns as if they contained poetry. Duke, the narrator, has a thing for boys, especially one called Amar, which has a suitably Arabic sound, tho the setting is American. The feeble-minded protagonist seems to project an image of swaggering male danger onto his adolescent lovers, while frequently reducing himself to baby talk.


—Jim Kepner



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**QUOTATIONS FROM CHIEF ED** (Or: *Six Years With Foot-In-Mouth Disease*), \$1.50 from The Gay Radio Collective, Station KPFK-FM, Box 8639, Universal City, CA 91608. 31 pages, is a collection of the perfer-vid opinions on many subjects by the biggest mouth in L.A., Police Chief Edward M. Davis, adequately edited to explain the context of quotes where needed, and to condense the chief's longwindedness without unduly tampering with his inimitable style. A booklet to keep next to your heart, along with your *Quotations from Chairman Mao*. "Lacking in humor" says the *Advocate* reviewer. *Newsweek* calls the author "no Tom Paine." Author of this work — Jim Kepner.

*The GOLDEN KEY 77 Edition of GAY GUIDE. The Swinging Gay Life* (COQ - International, A/S Tidsskriftet, P.O. Box 1039, DK 1007, Copenhagen K., Denmark) is a compact and handsome worldwide barlist with a few gay service groups included, plus brief comments on general conditions in each country. No price listed. List one L.A. bath defunct 5 years, but looks generally dependable.

**LESBIAN IMAGES** by Jane Rule, now in Pocket Books, \$1.95, 257 pgs., is a fine account of lesbian literature, with emphasis on Willa Cather, Radclyffe Hall, Colette, Gertrude Stein, Elizabeth Bowen, Virginia Sackville-West and Margaret Anderson, who dominated American literature for decades. A fine companion to Foster's out of print *Sex Variant Women in Literature*.

Dominique Fernandez's **PORPORINO, of The Secrets of Naples** (Morrow, \$10.95, 346 pgs.) could be a sequel to Goldman's *The Castrato*, reviewed here way back, except for a radical difference in style and interest. It tells of the last days of the great castrati singers, a lusty rococo supernovel, with hundreds of characters, many of them, like Mozart, Lady Hamilton, Queen Christina and countless Italian clergy and nobles, taken from history. Fernandez, unlike Goldman, recognizes that boys, cut off from certain fulfilments, may grow up to find joys elsewhere, but he is more concerned with Freemasonry's effect in cram-ping the aristocratic style of 18th Century Italy, and ending the castrati era.

John Mitzel's **JOHN HORNE BURNS, An Appreciative Biography** (Manifest Destiny Books, Box 57, Dorchester, MA 02124, \$2, 135 pgs.) is a lively account and critique of the brief (36 yrs.) and unhappy life of the author of the highly-praised *The Gallery* ("best novel of World War II") and 2 more novels, widely damned. Mitzel writes for Boston's gay lib journal, *Fag Rag*.

Randy Smallwood's slim pamphlet of gay poems, **SCREAM OF THE MIDNIGHT OWL** (Wind Press, Pikeville, Ky. 41501, \$1.50) has tight lines in contemporary style. Briefer and stronger is James Broughton's pansexual **EROGYNY**, written for his 1976 film (Manroot, Box 982, S.F., Ca. 94080, \$1).

—Jim Kepner





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## 1974

### FEBRUARY

Rick Herold, Grand Funk  
Fashion

### JUNE

Rick Gates, California Casual  
Fashion, Coming Out On Broadway

### SEPTEMBER

Alice Faye, Earl  
Wilson Jr., Nick Nolte, San  
Francisco Fashion

### OCTOBER

Marc Singer, Terrence McNally,  
Underwear, Marlboro Country

### NOVEMBER

Beau Bridges, Dakota, Skiing,  
Off-Off-Broadway

## 1975

### DEC./JAN.

John Calvin, Yucatan

### JUNE/JULY

Glenda Jackson, Poik

Street, Natchez, Grant Tracy  
Saxon, New Orleans

### AUG./SEPT.

Shirley MacLaine, Robert Morse,  
LaBelle, Jim  
Cassidy, Pat Rocco, Ed Fury,  
Fire Island

### OCT./NOV.

Tab Hunter, Paris, Columbia,  
Ann-Margaret, Michael Greer

## 1976

### DEC./JAN.

Elton John, Anne Baxter, Joseph  
Bottoms, Elizabeth Taylor, Chicago,  
Clyde Dayton Wallace, Art of Harry  
Bush, Tom DeSimone

### MAR./APR.

Barbra Streisand, Meiba Moore,  
Shirley Bassey, Bruce Davison, Tom  
O'Horgan, New York

## MAY/JUNE

Tennessee Williams, Sal Mineo,  
Martin Sheen, Cocteau's Sailors,  
London, Atlanta, Gotham

## JULY/AUG.

Christopher Isherwood, Russ Tamblyn,  
Wakefield Poole, Haiti, San Francisco,  
Patricia Nell Warren's "Front Runner"  
Tattoos, Making It In La Jolla

## SEPT./OCT.

Warren Beatty, Bette Midler, Peter  
Berlin, Los Angeles, Harry Bush's  
IN TOUCH Sketchbook, "The Outlaw"

## NOV./DEC.

Robert Redford, Jan-Michael Vincent,  
Lucille Ball, Australia, Boston,  
Walt Whitman, Men Together

## 1977

### JAN./FEB.

California Men, William S. Burroughs,  
Pittsburgh, Miami, Marilyn Monroe,  
Jeff Bridges, J. Brian's Blue World,  
Melville & Moby Dick, Buns

### MAR./APR.

David Bowie, Phoenix, Canada, Jack  
Wrangler, Gymnasts Together, James  
Leo Herlihy, Christy Twins

## MAY/JUNE

Salt Lake City, John Denver, E.M.  
Forster, Timothy Bottoms, Poetic World  
Of Walt Rinder, John Rechy's "Sexual  
Outlaw", Porn Filmmaker  
Jack Deveau, New Hampshire, Dave Kopay

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<input type="checkbox"/>	AUG./SEPT.	1975	19
<input type="checkbox"/>	OCT./NOV.	1975	20
<input type="checkbox"/>	DEC./JAN.	1976	21
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(continued from page 11)

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In keeping with the festive spirit generated by the numerous fun events flooding the tube lately, such as "Your Lover's Choice for the Oscars," "The So. Illinois TV Critics' Circle Awards," or the perennial standbys like Emmy & Oscar & Tony & Ted & Alice, your Correspondent - by - the - Bay has compiled some platitudes for local achievements over the past 2 months. The events are real; only the awards have been changed to indict the guilty and spread confusion.

The Jayne Mansfield Black Wig & Turtleneck Sweater Award for best attempt to radically alter one's public image goes to Michael Learned, better known to millions as TV's sturdy Mama Walton, for her startling depiction of a savage, sadistic 8th-grade school teacher in Roberto Athayde's "Miss Margarida's Way." Banned in the playwright's native Brazil for its many political implications, "Miss Margarida" is a powerful allegory that explores the relationship between those in positions of power and those who remain subservient. Through her salty, lengthy discourses on religion, history, mathematics and science, she stresses the need for blind obedience to survive.

Learned is wickedly amusing in this grueling 1-woman monologue, maintaining a surprisingly effective level of tyrannical menace and spouting a vocabulary that kept most of the opening nite audience fidgeting. A favorite line: "There are only 2 kinds of men in this world — homosexuals and faggots."

(Note: Following the S.F. engagement at Marines' Memorial, Learned is set to tour with "Margarida," paving the way for Ellen Burstyn, who'll star in it next fall on Broadway.)

The Gloria Loring Award for best recent nitery debut, goes to spunky, exceptionally talented Pamela Myers for her splendid work at the Mocambo. A veteran of such musicals as "Company" and "Snoopy!!!," Myers exhibited a rousing, powerhouse voice, a plaintive charm and excellent comedy flair, which should guarantee her entry into better showcases everywhere.

The JoAnn Worley Memorial Award for zaniest new revue goes to "The Orsborn Tapes," a totally in-

sane concoction by local producer / musician Dan Orsborn, at the Olde Spaghetti Factory. "Jive'n Ivan," "Lolita's Demise," "Nyah Nyah," "Tocata and Fish in A Minor" and "The Dead Horse Opera" are some of the selections in this "lost and found musicale" featuring Ellena Reisler, Jessica Epstein, Dario Fraticelli, Michael Harvey and (on a mean piano) Frank Siegel. Occasionally too broad, but colorful, unpredictable and never dull.

The Woody Allen-Louise Lasser Public Paranoia Award is won by Jules Feiffer for his wonderfully literate, very adult comedy, "Hold Me!" Devastatingly on-target and brutally honest, it captures the Feiffer essence so wisely depicted in his weekly *Village Voice* cartoons. Compactly directed and smoothly performed, it's one of the funniest new shows around. (At the Little Fox.)

For the best attempt to make Folsom wholesome, the San Francisco Bored of Supervisors Trophy is presented to the owners of Brasserie, a chic, attractively decorated restaurant at 1600 Folsom St. A continental atmosphere, elegant French cuisine, and Gershwin emanating from the Baby Grand. (Moderately expensive, but worth it.)

The Some of My Best Friends Are Still Award goes to "Handsome" Dick Manitoba of The Dictators, one of the better punk-rock bands. Briefly, here's why: A while back, The Dictators went to see Wayne County, a country-western transvestite singer, perform in N.Y. Evidently The Dictators got a bit rowdy (punks are wont to do so), and angered County, who rushed the audience flailing his/her microphone stand, breaking Manitoba's collarbone. Result: The Dictators recored "Smash That Faggot's Head Against the Wall," aimed at County but instead giving The Dictators a reputation as being homophobic. Postscript: The Dictators, while playing an engagement at the Mabuhay Gardens, lent their support to an anti-Anita Bryant rally on Castro St. clearing things up once and for all.

—Bob Kiggins





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